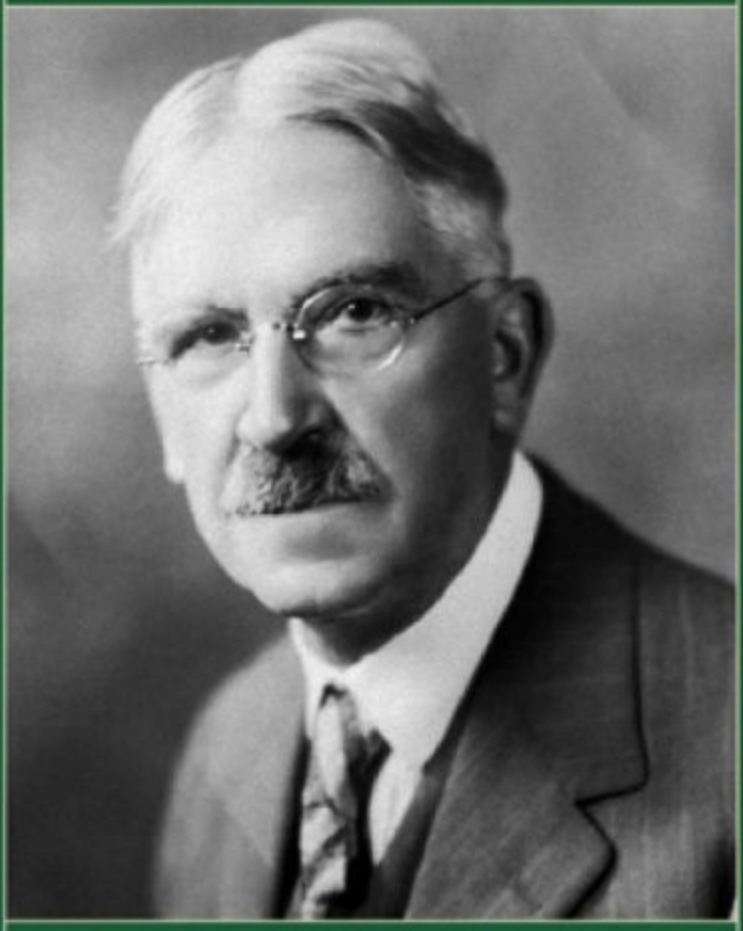
The Cambridge Companion to DEWEY



EDITED BY

MOLLY COCHRAN

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO

DEWEY

Each volume of this series of companions to major philosophers contains specially commissioned essays by an international team of scholars, together with a substantial bibliography, and will serve as a reference work for students and non-specialists. One aim of the series is to dispel the intimidation such readers often feel when faced with the work of a difficult and challenging thinker.

John Dewey (1859–1952) was a major figure of the American cultural and intellectual landscape in the first half of the twentieth century. While not the originator of American pragmatism, he was instrumental to its articulation as a philosophy and the spread of its influence beyond philosophy to other disciplines. His prolific writings encompass metaphysics; philosophy of mind; cognitive science; psychology; moral philosophy; the philosophies of religion, art, and education; and democratic political and international theory. The contributors to this *Companion* examine the wide range of Dewey's thought and provide a critical evaluation of his philosophy and its lasting influence.

New readers will find this the most convenient, accessible guide to Dewey currently available. Advanced students and specialists will find a conspectus of recent developments in the interpretation of Dewey.

MOLLY COCHRAN is Associate Professor of International Affairs in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at the Georgia Institute of Technology. She is the author of *Normative Theory in International Relations: A Pragmatic Approach* (1999).

The Cambridge Companion to

DEWEY

Edited by Molly Cochran
Georgia Institute of Technology

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METHOD OF CITATION

The complete works of John Dewey and the correspondence of John Dewey have been published in print editions by Southern Illinois University Press, and electronic editions by the InteLex Corporation in its *Past Masters* series. *John Dewey, The Collected Works, 1882–1953* spans thirty-seven volumes which are grouped into the following sets: *The Early Works, 1882–1898*, *The Middle Works, 1899–1924*, and *The Later Works, 1925–1953*. Each reference to Dewey's published writing in this *Companion* will indicate the year; whether it is noted from his *Early Works* (*EW*), *Middle Works* (*MW*), or *Later Works* (*LW*); and the volume number within that grouping of his *Works*, followed by the relevant page number(s) in the volume: for example, J. Dewey, "Progress" (1916), *MW* 10:242. *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952* is published in three volumes. All references to Dewey's correspondence in this *Companion* use this resource, making note of the author and recipient; the date; the number assigned to the letter; and the volume number: for example, John Dewey to Samuel O. Levinson 1923.05.15 (02772), *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, vol. 2.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF JOHN DEWEY

1859	Dewey is born in Burlington, Vermont on October 20
1879	Dewey is granted an A.B. degree from the University of Vermont
1879–81	Teaches high school and serves as Assistant Principal in Oil City, Pennsylvania
1881–2	Teaches at Lake View Seminary in Charlotte, Vermont
1882–4	Dewey attends graduate school at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore
1884	Dewey is granted his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University
1884	Instructor at the University of Michigan, Department of Philosophy
1886	Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Michigan
1886	Dewey marries Alice Chipman
1887	*Psychology* is published
1887	Son Frederick Archibald is born
1888	"The Ethics of Democracy" is published in the University of Michigan's *Philosophical Papers* series
1888	*Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding* is published
1888–9	Professor and Chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy and Logic, University of Minnesota
1889	Daughter Evelyn Riggs is born

1889	Chair, Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan
1892	Son Morris is born
1894	Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy, University of Chicago
1894	Founds Laboratory Schools at the University of Chicago
1895	While traveling in Europe, son Morris dies in Milan of diphtheria
1896–1904	Director, Laboratory School, University of Chicago
1896	Daughter Evelyn contracts diphtheria
1896	Son Gordon Chipman is born
1896	"The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" is published in *Psychological Review*
1897	Elected to the Board of Trustees, Hull-House Association
1897–9	National Education Association Council Member
1897	Daughter Lucy Alice is born
1899	*The School and Society* is published
1899–1900	President of the American Psychological Association
1899–1900	President, University Senate, University of Chicago
1900	Daughter Jane Mary is born
1902	Editor, *Elementary School Review*
1902	Appointed Director of School of Education and Head of Philosophy Department, University of Chicago
1904	Professor of Philosophy with a Lectureship in Psychology, Columbia University
1904	While traveling in Europe, son Gordon dies in Ireland
1905	Adopts Sabino Dewey, age five, in Italy
1905–6	President of the American Philosophical Society
1908	Dewey and J. H. Tufts's *Ethics* is published
1908	"What Pragmatism Means by Practical" and "Does Reality Possess Practical Character?" are published
1910	*How We Think* and *The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy* are published
1910	Elected to National Academy of Sciences
1910	General Committee member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

1913–14	President of the National Kindergarten Association
1914	Appointed Chairman of a committee to organize the American Association of University Professors
1916	*Democracy and Education* and *Essays in Experimental Logic* are published
1916	"Understanding the Mind of Germany" is published in *Atlantic Monthly* and "Force and Coercion" is published in the *International Journal of Ethics*
1918	Accepts Editorship of *Dial*
1919	Lectures in Japan
1919–21	Lectures in China
1920	*Reconstruction in Philosophy* is published
1922	*Human Nature and Conduct* is published
1924	Conducts educational survey of Turkey
1925	*Experience and Nature* is published
1925–6	Member of Board of Trustees of the China Foundation for the Promotion of Education and Culture
1926	Conducts educational survey of Mexico
1927	*The Public and its Problems* is published
1927	Alice Chipman Dewey dies
1928	Conducts educational survey of the Soviet Union
1928	Member of National Advisory Committee of the Sacco-Vanzetti National League
1928	Meets to form League for Independent Political Action (LIPA) and elected to provisional Executive Committee
1929	*The Quest for Certainty* is published
1929–36	President, People's Lobby
1929	Elected Chairman of National Committee of LIPA
1930	Dewey resigns, appointed Professor Emeritus from Columbia University
1930	"From Absolutism to Experimentalism" is published
1930	*Individualism, Old and New* is published
1930	Vice-President, League for Industrial Democracy
1930	Dewey publishes an open letter in *The New York Times* to US Senator George Norris asking him to leave the Republican Party and join LIPA in forming a third party
1931	Chairman, People's Lobby Joint Committee on Unemployment

1931	Vice-President, All America Reciprocity Union
1931	Member, American Civil Liberties Union National Committee on Labor Injunctions
1931	Chairman, Joint Committee on Unemployment
1932	Dewey and J. H. Tufts's revised *Ethics* is published
1933–5	Vice-president, American Association of Cultural Relations with Russia
1934	*A Common Faith* and *Art as Experience* are published
1934	Travels in Southern Africa
1935	*Liberalism and Social Action* is published
1937	Serves as Chair of the Commission of Inquiry into the Charges made against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials, Mexico
1938	*Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* and *Experience and Education* are published
1939	*Freedom and Culture* and *Theory of Valuation* are published
1939	President, League for Industrial Democracy
1941	Sponsors Committee for a Boycott against Japanese Aggression and National Boycott against Aggressor Nations
1942	Member, National Committees of both the International Rescue and Relief Committee and the Civil Rights Defense Committee
1942	Charter member of the American Society for Aesthetics
1946	Dewey marries Roberta Lowitz Grant
1946	*Knowing and the Known* is published
1952	Vice-president, Ethical Union
1952	Advisory Committee Member, Committee of Racial Equality
1952	Dewey dies in New York City on June 1

MOLLY COCHRAN

Introduction

At the twenty-third Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1932, John Dewey addressed his audience on the topic of the Great Depression. He highlighted the opportunity for more expansive democratic change that the economic crisis represented:

> The paradise of folly in which we have been living has broken down. That at least is some gain. It is something to become aware of the need for new ideas, new measures, new policies, new leaders, to bring about a great social reconstruction. More specifically, I think our depression has compelled us to think more fundamentally on social matters, economic matters, political matters, than we have been thinking for many years.[1]

As I write the introduction to this volume, the United States President Barack Obama has just reached his one-hundredth day in office. President Obama sees in this moment of global economic crisis, as Dewey did in 1932, an opportunity to push something akin to a "reset" button. In his Inaugural Address, Obama stated that the country must "begin again the work of remaking America." The approach he offers resonates with that of Dewey. It rejects absolutisms, or "worn out dogmas" as Obama put it, and is open and experimental, making tough choices not on the basis of fixed ideological preferences, but on the basis of "whether it works," and works in a way consistent with America's founding principles – or, as Dewey thought about it, America's democratic culture. Part of that democratic culture for Dewey was a faith in what Americans can create when they put individual intelligence to work on common problems. Dewey called for a "speculative audacity," a faith in ideas liberated from "timidity."[2] Obama's politics is based on a similar idea

of hope, tied, as he said at his inauguration, to a notion that America's achievements have been founded not upon the "sum of our individual ambitions," but upon what individuals who realize their connections with others have done and will do in the future. He concluded his Inaugural Address with a call for "a new era of responsibility – a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world."[3]

Over the last twenty years there has been a resurgence of interest in the work of John Dewey across a number of disciplines, reflecting the wide range of his intellectual pursuits in areas such as philosophy, political thought, psychology, education, communication studies, religion, art, and aesthetics. However, I draw upon the example of the new Obama administration to begin this introduction because Dewey himself would have been less interested in seeing his work invoked in the latest scholarly debates than in seeing intelligence and experimentalism applied to actually existing human problems of today. He would want to see evidence that, across more areas of life, individuals were developing the best in themselves, adapting successfully to and finding meaning in changed social and environmental conditions through cooperative problem-solving. The honing of human intelligence with a view to finding improved means of human coping was a lifelong aim of Dewey's and is reflected across the breadth of his writing. As Steven Rockefeller writes, for Dewey, "no moral value stands above critical evaluation and reconstruction, especially in times of social transition. The vital moral issue is to use experimental intelligence and a knowledge of conditions and consequences to guide this process wisely."[4]

Dewey was a major figure of the American intellectual and cultural landscape during the first half of the twentieth century and he published academic writing as well as political journalism over almost seventy years, his collected works spanning thirty-seven volumes. He lived to the age of ninety-two, having been born the year in which Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species* (1859), and he died in 1952 when America detonated the first hydrogen bomb. He was a child of the American Civil War, witnessed two World Wars, and lived to see the emergence of the Cold War and the start of the Korean War. Dewey was both a philosopher and a public intellectual who devoted his mental energies to thinking about the social and cultural changes that were impacting his world. He argued that

philosophy should do the same. Dewey was compelled to write about deep-running tensions such as those generated by scientific advances and the values of the day (evolutionary science and religious belief as well as the impact of the atomic age); war and democratic ends; and the advantages of capitalism and industrialism being associated with many dislocations and inequities (one could say that both Dewey and Karl Marx critiqued capitalism from a humanist vantage point).

Dewey was not the originator of the American tradition of philosophy known as pragmatism. Its founder was Charles Sanders Peirce, and he had a notable influence upon Dewey. However, Dewey played an important role in popularizing pragmatism and making it a public philosophy. In particular, his instrumentalism served to put flesh on the bones of what Peirce and William James, another important figure in the founding of this tradition, provided as its basic insight – that inquiry into the practical effects of our thought and action is the most important thing we humans do. Also, Dewey furnished pragmatism with an ethical theory that neither Peirce nor James provided, even though James's philosophy had a decidedly moral concern.[5]

Despite its early twentieth-century impact upon philosophy, both in America and beyond, the influence of pragmatism had waned by the 1950s and Dewey's once iconic status was forgotten. Both were overtaken by developments in analytical philosophy and the widening appeal of the formal methods of logical positivism in contrast to the seeming imprecision of pragmatism, with its focus upon the roles of change and contingency in human experience, and upon our reflections about how to adapt in relation to that experience. Today, however, the will to know a "real" world, the aim of analytical philosophy and of the less formal method of ordinary language analysis too, is under attack. Dewey's own sustained attack against traditional philosophy and its end goal – an ahistorical, universal knowledge of absolutes – has been revitalized by writers such as Richard Bernstein, Richard Rorty, and Hilary Putnam. They draw attention to Dewey's non-foundational approach to philosophy formulated before either Ludwig Wittgenstein or Martin Heidegger, and Rorty credits Dewey, more than anyone, with influencing his own approach to philosophy as cultural critique.[6]

Most important to the reconstruction of philosophy that Dewey wanted to affect was his theory of inquiry. His intention was to give philosophy a direct, organic relationship to lived experience and

provide a method by which individuals could exist better in the world. Dewey was influenced by the evolutionary theory of Darwin and believed that humans are adaptive beings who shape and are shaped by their natural and social environments. Inquiry into any kind of problem, whether it is a problem of the natural or the social world, is best modeled upon scientific method. The only significant dissimilarity between the two types of problem is one of starting point, and it is a difference of complexity in particular. Inquiry in natural science begins with natural phenomena. Social scientific inquiry begins with moral questions about human problems, asking what "ought" to be done. The latter is more complex than inquiry in natural science since it cannot engage in the selective abstractions that natural science can without being reduced too much to the physical, overlooking subjective human factors. Nonetheless, the logical conditions of the two are the same. Both kinds of inquiry are grounded in experience – the facts of an indeterminate situation. And the end point of each is the same: to gain a sense of determinacy by being able to make a "warranted assertion." However, any such resolution was understood by Dewey always to be provisional, merely a resting place for inquiry. As he wrote: "conclusions of special inquiries are parts of an enterprise that is continually renewed, or is a going concern."[7] New indeterminacies arise, solutions that worked before become unstuck, and one is forced to begin inquiry again.

Dewey's philosophy was concept-led rather than concept-driven. Concept-driven philosophy suffered Dewey's most stinging rebukes in *The Reconstruction of Philosophy* for being a species of philosophical analysis for analysis's sake rather than seeing concepts as tools that could be usefully applied in thinking about human problems scientifically. According to Dewey, the conceptual vocabulary of traditional philosophy needed to be re-worked with this in mind. There were many concepts that received reconstructive treatment of this kind by Dewey, but three such concepts will be discussed here briefly as examples central to his work: experience, intelligence, and situation.

Experience refers to both physical nature and the interaction of living things with their environment. Dewey's naturalism rejected the dualistic separation of humans from their environment found in Cartesian epistemology. His understanding of experience as context

was dynamic. Humans acting and knowing in the world change the world, and both biological and cultural forces condition human experience as well. While he did not equate experience with knowledge, he argued that experience yields method, since for both biological and emotional reasons we make use of experience, noting its functional constancies and acting upon those constancies to refine the ways in which we draw from experience, thereby improving upon it. Thus, his was an instrumentalist view of experience that sought to control and direct experience where possible. "We use our past experiences to construct new and better ones in the future. The very fact of experience thus includes the process by which it directs itself in its own betterment."[8] Thus, that process – inquiry arising from the problematic situations of human experience – is ameliorative.

The concept of intelligence also has a central place in Dewey's thought. Dewey sought to avoid the pitfalls he found in the concept of reason as it had been used in traditional philosophy and noted the contrast between the two, writing that "intelligence is as practical as reason is theoretical."[9] Human intelligence starts with experience, but is critical and future-oriented. It is not instrumental in the sense of being a means for "mechanically" producing a predetermined end. Instead, it is instrumental in another sense. It is an imaginative and creative "organ" that guides the "transformation of past into future," and has import for "all the disciplines which have an intimate connection with human conduct: – to logic, ethics, esthetics, economics, and the procedure of the sciences formal and natural."[10] When considering the value of any conclusion, Dewey believed the method by which it is reached is all-important, and argued that "the perfecting of method, the perfecting of intelligence, is the thing of supreme value."[11] Using the method of intelligence for the purpose of enriching human experience was ethically significant for Dewey. The process of perfecting or refining intelligence leads to "growth," which he saw as the only moral end,[12] and what counts as growth can only be determined in the process of inquiry. However, according to Dewey, growth requires that individuals and social institutions take responsibility for improving the method of intelligence and critically examine its social use, because he thought that intelligence was not innate, nor could it be honed successfully in isolation. Dewey also believed that, in order to mature, intelligence needed a "free and stable society,"[13] and thus growth required a democratic culture

that cultivated "cooperative intelligence."[14] In his 1932 *Ethics*, Dewey wrote: "the effective socialization of intelligence is probably the greatest problem of democracy today."[15]

Situation was another important concept for Dewey's theory of inquiry, integrating the human agent with the conditions of her environment or sphere of action. Context was everything for Dewey, and he argued that traditional philosophy failed to understand its significance; as Dewey wrote, metaphysical procedure worked independently of "the limits of a historic or developing situation."[16] However, he believed that it was the quality of indeterminacy in connection with a situation that initiated inquiry. An indeterminate situation is one in which "its constituents do not hang together."[17] The sense of confusion engendered by a situation, rendering it problematic, sparks action that seeks to alter that status quo. In Dewey's words, "*The function of reflective thought is, therefore, to transform a situation in which there is experienced obscurity, doubt, conflict, disturbance of some sort, into a situation that is clear, coherent, settled, harmonious*."[18] Action of this kind is framed within the way a situation is characterized as a problem, and moves forward through hypothesis formation that proposes solutions and possible outcomes. Imagination is critical in projecting hypothetical outcomes, but it is ultimately constrained by the conditions of the situation. Any solution must have a "functional fitness" to the problem at hand,[19] and the success of an inquiry is determined by whether the plan of action suggested by a hypothesis and its execution, the experiment, makes coherent the conflict that was originally felt to be a problem.

In the essays that follow, more comment upon Dewey's theory of inquiry, these three concepts, and about growth and habit in Dewey's thought will be provided as they pertain to the areas of research represented in the volume. The contributors also devote space to explaining Dewey's naturalism, organicism, and his instrumentalism or experimentalism. Controversies in connection with Dewey's instrumentalism and scientism – for example, whether scientific method can go as far in securing social well-being as Dewey suggests – are also discussed.

The above are familiar themes that reappear, linking Dewey's thought on the numerous subjects that captured his interest. The intent of the volume is to capture those themes and reflect the

wide range of his intellectual interests. Thus, the reader will find in this volume chapters on the topics of metaphysics; epistemology; philosophy of the mind; cognitive science; psychology; moral philosophy; the philosophies of religion, art, and education; and democratic political and international theory. The breadth of subject-matter displayed here, due to the extensive reach of Dewey's philosophy, makes this particular *Companion* in the Cambridge series somewhat unusual. Consequently, contributors to the volume have been asked where needed to provide brief accounts of the "state of the art" in the fields addressed here, keeping readers who may be new to these subjects in mind. The argument one finds often repeated across the areas surveyed here – that Dewey has left an intellectual imprint worthy of our critical attention today – is quite humbling to us all who are aspiring or practicing academicians.

The opening chapter by Robert Westbrook provides an intellectual biography of John Dewey, addressing his early Hegelianism and then his turn to pragmatism, and isolates democracy as the "intellectualized wish" that lends coherence to the diversity of his pursuits as both a scholar and an activist.

The next four chapters examine Dewey's instrumental logic of inquiry and naturalistic metaphysics. Ruth Anna Putnam introduces the reader to what Dewey believed to be the central problem of philosophy – in her words, "how to preserve the authority of the values that guide our lives in an age that gives supreme cognitive authority to science" – and she explains that Dewey's answer, overcoming the separation between theory and practice, was the aim of his theory of inquiry or instrumental theory of knowledge. Richard M. Gale's chapter explains Dewey's idea of nature as *Lebenswelt*. Gale provides an account of Dewey's metaphysics of naturalism and the themes of experience as background, continuity, and organicism, which in his opinion retain a Hegelian will to unity despite Dewey's appeal to the generic traits of existence. Gale looks at examples of Dewey's naturalism applied to epistemology, aesthetics, ethics, and religion to support his view that Dewey's naturalism is of an anthropomorphic or humanistic kind. Isaac Levi discusses Dewey's logic of inquiry. In particular, Levi emphasizes the normative element in Dewey's understanding of the ultimate subject of logic, writing that what sets Dewey's logic of inquiry apart from Peirce's is that Dewey "held that in inquiry, we seek to change situations – not states of

belief or points of view," downplaying the value of truth in inquiry. This casual attitude to truth is not something Levi admires in Dewey, but he believes that the great strength of Dewey's model of inquiry is the way it generalizes the logic of scientific inquiry, and finds that logic reflected in the realms of politics, art, and morals, bridging the gap between these cultural practices and science. J. E. Tiles explores Dewey's anti-epistemological epistemology and examines his experimental empiricism. Tiles explains the significance of the concept of habit for Dewey's empiricism, and his genetic account of the development of habitual responses through the process of inquiry, and argues that Dewey's particular brand of experimentalism is capable of delivering norms of science. Tiles argues that Dewey did so "in a way that totally abstracted from the use of mathematical forms in empirical inquiry" and with a view to demonstrating that "even forms of reasoning answer to experience."

The next set of chapters looks at Dewey's theory of mind and action theory as they relate to cognitive science. Mark Johnson explains that Dewey's naturalism, defined by the principle of continuity, produced a non-dualistic concept of the mind and Dewey's felt need to coin the term "body–mind." Johnson argues that almost fifty years before cognitive science was developed as a field, Dewey constructed a broad philosophical framework for understanding the implications of contemporary cognitive science – in particular, his insights about how the mind is both embodied and imaginative – even though cognitive science today would require us to update some of Dewey's claims about how the mind works. Matthias Jung examines Dewey's theory of action and speaks to its significance for cognitive science and social theory too. Jung writes that the concept of action has wide application across a range of disciplines, but that despite the diversity of thought about action and its uses, its conceptualization is largely shaped by either rational choice theory or normative theories of action. Dewey's particular contribution to action theory, according to Jung, is that Dewey offers a rather attractive alternative to the two: a concept of action that emphasizes the importance of situation, corporeality and sociality, and identifies habit and embodied creativity as universals in human action.

The following two chapters look at Dewey's moral theory. Jennifer Welchman explains that Dewey was an ethical naturalist who believed, in contrast to non-cognitivists such as Hume (also an ethical

naturalist), that values are responsive to reason and empirically verifiable. However, unlike many cognitive naturalists, Dewey was not a moral realist, since for Dewey a value judgment is a judgment about what course of action best fulfills a function. It is practical, and practical moral judgments are especially complex because they involve making choices between different possible resolutions that reflect on the agent herself personally as well as impacting on the outcomes she wants to affect. Welchman describes Dewey's problem with noncognitivism and the way he seeks to reconstruct ethical naturalism, discussing his treatments of our moral psychology, valuation, practical deliberation, and what they mean for normative theory. James Bohman picks up from where Welchman leaves off, exploring the social reform element of Dewey's ameliorative naturalist ethics. Bohman writes that, in contrast to social psychologists of his day, Dewey's moral and social psychology offered a vigorous defense of democracy and human rationality and sought to overcome the idea that social reform meant that: "either changing institutions requires first changing human sentiment, or changing human nature requires first changing institutions. The Deweyan alternative incorporates elements of both horns." Bohman examines Dewey's moral theory in light of the debate over these two ideas of social reform continuing today, and concludes that Dewey's contextualist approach to moral and social psychology remains worthwhile, as does his practical aim of improving moral judgments with a view to making them better suited to the social changes brought on by industrialization.

The chapters by Sami Pihlström, Richard Eldridge, and Nel Noddings examine Dewey's writings on religion, aesthetics, and education respectively. Pihlström describes the socially grounded, naturalist conception of religious faith that Dewey developed in his work *A Common Faith*, and in other writings, and places his religious thought in the context of the metaphysics vs. antimetaphysics debate that permeates twentieth-century philosophy of religion. According to Pihlström, Dewey's contributions in this area are other instances of his general proclivity to reconstruct patterns of thought, and dichotomous thinking in particular, since he "attacks the traditionally sharp dualism between the spiritual and the secular or profane," as well as mediates the divide between metaphysics and the critique of metaphysics. However, Pihlström acknowledges this problem: does Dewey's naturalization of the religious qualities of experience

transform religious experience into something else? Richard Eldridge explains that Dewey's approach to the philosophy of art was motivated by his will to link art and its philosophy to wider human problems, and in particular to reconnect meaning with human action in modern industrial society. Eldridge explores two themes that organize Dewey's principal work in this area, *Art and Experience*, and discusses many of its topics, concluding that despite Stanley Cavell's criticism that Dewey tries to unite more than the modern world can allow, Eldridge is still inclined to recommend Dewey's vision of what philosophy, art, and imagination should aim for: creating "better modalities of life." Noddings offers an "appreciative critique" of Dewey's philosophy of education, examining it through the feminist lens of care theory. Noddings surveys five key topics in Dewey's extensive work on education: the child, the curriculum, learning and inquiry, democracy, and moral education. In doing so, Noddings argues that there is much overlap in the ways Dewey and care theorists conceive of the active nature of the child, the interactive curriculum, the importance of inquiry and critical thinking, and the need to develop and improve democratic ideas, but that Dewey falls short in failing to explicitly address the experience of women, especially in relation to an expanded curriculum and their moral education.

The last two chapters bring the volume back to where it began, with Dewey's democratic thought. Richard Bernstein aims to demonstrate how central democracy is to Dewey's philosophy and how rich his thinking about democracy is, working outside certain limitations in contemporary democratic theory associated with participatory, procedural, and deliberative democracy. However, Bernstein argues that there is not enough institutional analysis or sustained comment on the kind of economic reform or the integrative principle that his ideal of democracy required. My chapter examines Dewey's engagement with international politics, and his belief that Old World diplomacy should be replaced with a new international politics reconstructed along democratic lines. The chapter asks how Dewey understood the international situation in the early years of World War One, and what he thought experimentalism in this arena required. As during the Great Depression, Dewey saw in these decades of great international turbulence an opportunity to set a different "reset" button – one at the level of intersocietal interaction, extending the reach of democracy there too.

Dewey is criticized for not being able to deliver in any concrete or programmatic way on the social reform he envisioned. His method could not provide such answers, but his actions did. Dewey's advocacy in connection with the People's Lobby to establish new social welfare programs during the Depression, his work with Samuel Levinson in the campaign to outlaw war, his critical roles in founding or giving vital support to the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, the New School for Social Research, the Association of American University Professors, and the American Civil Liberties Union all speak to the practical implications of Dewey's significant philosophical output. The challenge that Dewey sets for us today is not one of sitting back with a view to being disconnected observers of our environs, designing grand theories, but actively engaging and critically examining the methods of intelligence we use and how we apply them to human problems. Therein lie no guarantees of happiness or growth, but, according to Dewey, this direction to human activity co-joined with a faith in our adaptive abilities is guidance enough. It remains to be seen where we take it.

NOTES

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1. J. Dewey, "Address to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" (1932), *LW* 6:224.
2. J. Dewey, "Philosophy and Civilization" (1927), *LW* 3:10.
3. The word pragmatism is often linked with Barack Obama, but for thoughts about Obama and the tradition of American philosophy called pragmatism, and John Dewey in particular, see C. Sunstein, "The Empiricist Strikes Back: Obama's Pragmatism Explained," *The New Republic*, 239:4 (September 10, 2008), 9–10; C. Hayes, "The Pragmatist," *The Nation*, 287:22 (December 29, 2008), 13–16.
4. S.C. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 285.
5. H.S. Thayer, *Meaning and Action: A Critical History of Pragmatism* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1981), p. 383.

6. Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth: Philosophical Papers*, vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 16, and "Comments on Sleeper and Edel," *Transactions of the C. S. Peirce Society* 21 (1985), 39.
7. J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *LW* 12:16.
8. J. Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *MW* 12:134.
9. J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *LW* 4:170.
10. J. Dewey, "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy" (1917), *MW* 10:45 and 47.
11. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 160.
12. Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, p. 181.
13. J. Dewey, "Intelligence and Morals" (1902), *MW* 4:31.
14. J. Dewey, *Freedom and Culture* (1939), *LW* 13:187. See James Campbell's development of this theme in Dewey in his *Understanding Dewey: Nature and Cooperative Intelligence* (Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing, 1995).
15. J. Dewey, *Ethics* (1932), *LW* 7:365–6.
16. J. Dewey, *Studies in Logical Theory* (1903), *MW* 2:304–5.
17. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 109.
18. J. Dewey, *How We Think* (1933), *LW* 8:195; emphasis in the original.
19. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 114.

1 The making of a democratic philosopher: the intellectual development of John Dewey

John Dewey's way of thinking about thinking invites the intellectual historian. We are scholars eager to put thought in its contexts: not only contexts internal to the history of philosophy but social, political, cultural, and biographical contexts. Dewey not only shared this impulse and wrote some provocative intellectual history himself, but provided the enterprise with philosophical underpinnings.[1]

Dewey argued that human beings were thinkers only in the second instance. In the first instance, he said, the self was "an agent-patient, doer, sufferer, and enjoyer." Thinking emerged out of non-cognitive, "primary experience" and was in the service of controlling and enriching such experience. "To be a man," Dewey argued, "is to be thinking desire." In one of his most often-quoted remarks, he warned his fellow philosophers that they were losing sight of their cultural embodiment and that they were on the path to terminal marginality unless philosophy "ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men."[2]

Positions such as these not only underwrite intellectual history. They also inevitably provoke the interest of intellectual historians in Dewey's own desires, his own primary experience, and his own engagement with the problems of those outside the narrow circle of professional philosophers. They alert the antennae of intellectual biographers.

NINETY YEARS

Born in Burlington, Vermont, the son of a storekeeper, Dewey graduated from the University of Vermont in 1879. After a brief stint as a

schoolteacher in western Pennsylvania and Vermont, he enrolled as a graduate student in the department of philosophy at Johns Hopkins University. There he came under the influence of George S. Morris, a neo-Hegelian idealist. Receiving his Ph.D. in 1884 with a dissertation on Kant, Dewey followed Morris to the University of Michigan, and assumed the leadership of the philosophy department there following Morris's untimely death in 1889.[3]

At the heart of Dewey's early work at Michigan was an effort to put liberal Christianity on a neo-Hegelian foundation and thereby to protect it from the threat of modern, especially Darwinian, science. His contribution to this project was a bold, controversial, and, for many, unconvincing merger of idealist metaphysics and recent developments in experimental psychology.

In 1894 Dewey left Michigan for the newly founded University of Chicago. There during the 1890s he moved steadily away from absolute idealism toward a new philosophy that William James would in 1898 dub pragmatism. At Chicago, Dewey also began to devote himself to pedagogy and school reform – interests that had emerged during his Michigan years. Believing that the classroom was an ideal setting in which to test the new psychology and philosophy that he was formulating, he persuaded the university to establish a Laboratory School in 1896 for this purpose. In its curriculum, as well as in such widely read books as *The School and Society* (1899), *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), and later *Democracy and Education* (1916), Dewey criticized both traditionalist advocates of a "studies-centered" curriculum and reformers given to romantic "child-centered" pedagogy. Dewey called upon educators to build upon the impulses that children brought with them to school, but he attacked those who would merely give these impulses free rein. Rather than leave children to their own devices as romantics recommended, or impose subject-matter on them as traditionalists advised, Dewey proposed constructing an environment in which the child, engaged in familiar activity, would be confronted with problems solvable only with the aid of the knowledge and skills supplied by traditional subjects.

Dewey resigned from the faculty at Chicago in 1904 following a bitter dispute with university president William Rainey Harper over the role of Dewey's wife, Alice, in the administration of the Laboratory School. He was quickly hired by the philosophy

department at Columbia University, where he taught for the remainder of his career. Much of Dewey's work in the first two decades of the twentieth century centered on a complicated three-way epistemological debate between idealists, realists, and pragmatists. Dewey attacked both idealism and realism as species of "intellectualism" which, by regarding man in the first instance as a spectatorial "knower" detached from the rest of nature, created all sorts of insoluble problems and insurmountable dualisms of mind and world. These difficulties could be overcome, he argued, by recognizing that knowing was a second-order, functional, mediating activity that occurred at problematic moments within a larger, more immediate realm of non-cognitive experience and truth was the predicate of judgments that resolved such problems. He contended that this was the way both ordinary men and women and modern scientists thought about knowledge and truth, and philosophers would do well to follow their example.

Dewey's own most significant venture into the problems of men in these years was an unhappy one. He threw his support behind American intervention in World War I, hoping against an abundance of evidence to the contrary that the war could help make the world safe for a democracy even more thoroughgoing than that envisioned by Woodrow Wilson. "Industrial democracy is on the way," Dewey told a *New York World* reporter in July 1917. "The rule of the Workmen and the Soldiers will not be confined to Russia; it will spread through Europe; and this means that the domination of all upper classes, even of what we have been knowing as 'respectable society,' is at an end." Dewey's shortsightedness occasioned an acute polemic by his former student Randolph Bourne, who charged him with a failure of pragmatic intelligence only slightly less disastrous than the belligerent enthusiasm of younger progressives who had made of "pragmatism" little more than the exercise of technical reason on behalf of the demiurge of war.[4]

After the war, at an age at which he might well have contemplated retirement, Dewey embarked on three more decades of intense labor as a philosopher and activist. In a series of public lectures and magisterial volumes – *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *Experience and Nature* (1925), *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *Art as Experience* (1934), *A Common Faith* (1934), and *Logic: the Theory of Inquiry* (1938) – he reiterated his criticism of the "spectatorial"

theory of knowledge and truth and elaborated his pragmatic alternative. But he also, most significantly, offered his view of the noncognitive realm of experience and of the "consummatory experience" of art, religion, and everyday activity which made life worth living.

Dewey spent most of the years 1919–21 in China, where he was lionized by Chinese liberals who were struggling unsuccessfully amidst revolutionary turmoil to democratize their culture and society. Upon his return to the United States, he devoted much of his energy to playing a leading role in the Outlawry of War movement. In advancing outlawry arguments, Dewey began to articulate a view of war as an uncontrollable and counterproductive means of democratic social action, a view very close to the one Bourne had pressed on him during World War I. He also found himself at odds with former progressive comrades such as Walter Lippmann, who in the war's wake were recommending greater realism about democracy's possibilities. Dewey offered a forceful ethical defense of expansive democratic ideals in *The Public and its Problems* (1927), albeit one that did little to deter the effects among liberal intellectuals of the withering skepticism that Lippmann and others had generated about practical hopes for anything more than a profoundly constricted democratic politics.

With the collapse of American capitalism in 1929, Dewey began to articulate his own peculiar version of democratic socialism in such books as *Individualism Old and New* (1930), *Liberalism and Social Action* (1935), and *Freedom and Culture* (1939). He assumed a leading role among critics of the New Deal and as a spokesman for radical third-party politics. At the same time, he voiced vigorous opposition throughout the 1930s and 1940s to the terrors of the Soviet regime and to the antidemocratic politics of the American Communist Party.

Following his death in 1952, Dewey's stock among American philosophers fell rapidly with the ascendancy of analytical philosophers who regarded him, as James Gouinlock has said, as "a nice old man who hadn't the vaguest conception of real philosophical rigor or the nature of a real philosophical problem."[5] He fared no better among educators, many of whom blamed him for the woes wrought by progressive "Deweyan" reforms that he in fact opposed, or among leading political theorists given to continued hard-boiled realism about the limits of democratic horizons.

But the latter years of the twentieth century witnessed a considerable revival of interest in Dewey's thinking, and fostered a host of "neopragmatisms" indebted to it, most notably that of Richard Rorty, one of the most prominent (and certainly the most famous) of American philosophers of the last quarter-century. Rorty acclaimed Dewey as one of the three most important philosophers of the century (along with Wittgenstein and Heidegger), and he and other neopragmatists have once again put pragmatism, and Deweyan pragmatism in particular, on the American intellectual map as a forceful and independent presence – not only among philosophers but across disciplinary lines and in the wider culture.[6]

PHILOSOPHY AND DEMOCRACY

How, if at all, might we lend some coherence to this extraordinarily diverse and rich career and the enormous body of work it generated? What, if anything, bound the epistemological pragmatist to the educational visionary to the naturalist metaphysician to the liberal socialist to the romantic aesthetician to the determined anticommunist? Did the voice of the professor who wrangled with Josiah Royce in the pages of the *Journal of Philosophy* echo at all in that of the intellectual who sparred with Walter Lippmann in the *New Republic* – and vice versa? Was there not a grinding of gears as Dewey wrapped up *Experience and Nature* and began work on *The Public and its Problems*? Was *Art as Experience* a welcome diversion from the radical political debates of the early 1930s or a contribution to them? Should we leave Dewey's thinking to be carved up by specialists or is there a whole of admittedly many parts to be made of it? And if there is coherence here, how do we explain it? What sort of desire underpinned Dewey's thinking?

Dewey himself had some ideas on the subject – good ones. In the twilight of his long life, as he reached the age of eighty, he reflected publicly on that life and on the career he had made as a philosopher. And he surprised no one in the audience that had gathered in the fall of 1939 to celebrate his birthday when on that occasion he placed his faith in democracy at the heart of his biography and his philosophical project.

Dewey made it clear that the whole of his thinking was grounded in a commitment to democracy as a moral ideal, and that he had

devoted his life to the construction of a persuasive and multidimensional philosophical argument for this ideal and to an activism that struggled to secure its practical realization. Among liberal intellectuals of the twentieth century, Dewey was the most important advocate of participatory, deliberative democracy: that is, of the belief that democracy as an ethical ideal calls upon men and women to build communities in which the necessary opportunities and resources are available for every individual to realize his or her particular capacities and powers through participation in political, social, and cultural life.

"Democracy," Dewey said in his birthday address, "is a way of personal life controlled not merely by faith in human nature in general but by faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgment and action if proper conditions are furnished." This faith rested on the egalitarian conviction that "every human being, independent of the quantity or range of his personal endowment, has the right to equal opportunity with every other person for development of whatever gifts he has," and the "task of democracy is forever that of creation of a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute." In his own case, Dewey observed, "I did not invent this faith. I acquired it from my surroundings as far as those surroundings were animated by the democratic spirit."[7]

Unfortunately, autobiographical reflections of this sort were, for Dewey, rare. And even when given to them, as in this case, he could withhold the specific detail upon which a biographer might hope to fasten. Yet Dewey did drop some hints along the way about which of those "surroundings" were particularly important in the acquisition of the democratic faith that became the lodestar of his thinking. But before I turn to these surroundings, let me say a bit more about the central place of this democratic faith in Dewey's thinking.

Here, fortunately, Dewey was quite explicit – most notably in an important essay entitled, appropriately enough, "Philosophy and Democracy." This essay originated as a talk Dewey gave at the University of California on his way to the Far East in the fall of 1918. In it, he contended that philosophy was not "in any sense whatever a form of knowledge" but rather "a form of desire, of effort at action – a love, namely, of wisdom." Wisdom was not "systematic and proved knowledge of fact and truth, but a conviction about moral values, a sense for the better kind of life to be led." Historically, philosophies "embodied not colorless intellectual readings of reality,

but men's most passionate desires and hopes, their basic beliefs about the sort of life to be lived." Philosophers "started not from science, not from ascertained knowledge, but from moral convictions, and then resorted to the best knowledge and the best intellectual methods available in their day to give the form of demonstration to what was essentially an attitude of will, or a moral resolution to prize one mode of life more highly than another, and the wish to persuade other men that this was the wise way of living." Because philosophy was wisdom and not knowledge, one could speak of a national philosophy but not a national chemistry. The cultural variation in philosophies reflected "incompatibilities of temperament and expectation. They are different ways of construing life."[8]

To view philosophy as wisdom rather than knowledge was not, Dewey was careful to point out, to say that it was an *arbitrary* expression of moral desire. "All philosophy bears an intellectual impress because it is an effort to convince some one, perhaps the writer himself, of the reasonableness of some course of life which has been adopted from custom or instinct." Philosophy "can intellectually recommend its judgments of value only as it can select relevant material from that which is recognized to be established truth, and can persuasively use current knowledge to drive home the reasonableness of its conception of life." Philosophy dressed itself in the garb of knowledge, yet this garb was essential. It was what made philosophy hard work and worthwhile. "Scientific form is a vehicle for conveying a non-scientific conviction, but the carriage is necessary, for philosophy is not mere passion but a passion that would exhibit itself as a reasonable persuasion." This combination, Dewey observed, made philosophy a very tricky business, for the temptation was, on the one hand, to adopt "the conceit of knowledge" and provide moral vision with a set of counterfeit scientific credentials or, on the other hand, to leave moral vision altogether bereft of whatever support science might provide it, in which case "philosophy becomes hortatory, edifying, sentimental, or fantastic and semi-magical."[9]

Dewey conceded that it was difficult to avoid these temptations, and he himself succumbed to each on occasion. Nonetheless, it was, above all, the exercise of this difficult kind of moral imagination which he sought to put at the heart of his vocation. "A philosophy which was conscious of its own business and province," he said,

would recognize that "it is an intellectualized wish, an aspiration subjected to rational discriminations and tests, a social hope reduced to a working program of action, a prophecy of the future, but one disciplined by serious thought and knowledge."[10]

Dewey left no doubt about where his own social hope lay. Democracy was his desire. He then laid out a series of questions that revealed his own agenda for rendering this desire "an intellectualized wish":

> Is democracy a comparatively superficial human expedient, a device of petty manipulation, or does nature itself, as that is uncovered and understood by our best contemporaneous knowledge, sustain and support our democratic hopes and aspirations? Or, if we choose to begin arbitrarily at the other end, if to construct democratic institutions is our aim, how then shall we construe and interpret the natural environment and natural history of humanity in order to get an intellectual warrant for our endeavors, a reasonable persuasion that our undertaking is not contradicted by what science authorizes us to say about the structure of the world? How shall we read what we call reality (that is to say the world of existence accessible to verifiable inquiry) so that we may essay our deepest political and social problems with a conviction that they are to a reasonable extent sanctioned and sustained by the nature of things? Is the world as an object of knowledge at odds with our purposes and efforts? Is it merely neutral or indifferent? Does it lend itself equally to all our social ideals, which means that it gives itself to none, but stays aloof, ridiculing as it were the ardor and earnestness with which we take our trivial and transitory hopes and plans? Or is its nature such that it is at least willing to cooperate, that it not only does not say us nay, but gives us an encouraging nod?[11]

Dewey's philosophy, in all its dimensions, was an effort to make the case that the world offered democrats a host of encouraging nods.

In "Philosophy and Democracy," Dewey's principal concern was metaphysics, and he looked forward to the arguments of *Experience and Nature* and other metaphysical work he would undertake in the 1920s.[12] But the agenda he laid out for democratic philosophers in this essay was hardly new. He had long before overtly tied his earlier work in epistemology, ethics, and education to his democratic desires, and in 1904 he declared that "American philosophy must be born out of and must respond to the demands of democracy, as democracy strives to voice and achieve itself on a vaster scale, and in a more thorough and final way than history has previously witnessed."[13]

Dewey's democratic faith, first sighted in the late 1880s, was thus firmly in place when he departed Chicago for New York. So it is to these years we must look if we are to understand the making of this democratic philosopher and pinpoint the "surroundings animated by the democratic spirit" that contributed to it. Which of these surroundings did most to make Dewey a democrat? If we look beneath the impressive and important intellectual garb with which he dressed his philosophy, which contexts should be placed foremost in explaining the emergence of the body of its underlying moral convictions?

ALICE

Pride of place here, I would argue, must go to his extraordinary first wife, Alice Chipman Dewey. The daughter of a cabinet maker who had migrated as a boy from Vermont to Michigan, Alice was orphaned at an early age, and raised in Fenton, Michigan, by her maternal grandparents. Her grandfather, Frederick Riggs, was a Michigan pioneer who had come to the state as a fur trader for the Hudson Bay Company and was an adopted member of the Chippewa tribe. A champion of Indian rights, Riggs imparted to his granddaughter a disdain for social conventions and a critical social conscience as well as a fiercely independent and self-reliant character. After graduating from high school, Alice taught in the Michigan schools for several years before enrolling at the University of Michigan in 1882. She met Dewey at the boardinghouse where they both lived and was a student of his in the fall of 1884. Although some students found Dewey "cold, impersonal, psychological, sphinx-like, anomalous and petrifying to flunkers," Alice melted his heart. They were married in 1886.[14]

Many observers commented on Alice Dewey's keen intelligence and the breadth and intensity of her social concern. Widely and deeply read, she was from an early age a vigorous proponent of women's equality; women who visited the Dewey home spoke admiringly, if somewhat ambivalently, of her "masculine" virtues. As one put it, "she helps me to think of life, real activities, more than the subjectivities of my own communings with self." Alice had much the same effect on Dewey, who credited her with putting "guts and stuffing" into his work. In the mid-1880s, Alice herself was clearly the centerpiece of Dewey's desires. But she came bearing gifts. Dewey no doubt meant many things when he later told Max Eastman that

"she liberated me," but among them was his own awareness that it was, above all, Alice who turned Dewey's attention at the outset of his career from the problems of philosophers to the problems of men.[15]

With the exception of a few issues such as educational reform and feminism, it is difficult to nail down Alice's influence on Dewey very precisely. Nonetheless, what remains of their considerable correspondence indicates that, for a number of years, it was Alice who was the more radical democrat in the family – though Dewey quickly caught up. Before his marriage, the word "democracy" does not appear in Dewey's writing,[16] but shortly thereafter his work took a decidedly ethical and political turn. In 1888 he published the first testament of his newfound democratic faith in a long essay, "The Ethics of Democracy" in which he declared that "Democracy and the one, the ultimate, ethical ideal of humanity are to my mind synonyms." Alice, no doubt, approved.[17]

Initially, Dewey dressed his democratic convictions in the neo-Hegelian garb that he had already appropriated on behalf of his liberal Christianity. Outfitting them in this fashion was not difficult to do, since the clothing came ready-made. He turned to T. H. Green and other British idealists for the conceptions of the "social organism" and "positive liberty" that he needed, and proceeded to advance the arguments for more expansive and egalitarian democracy that were Green's legacy to British "new" liberals.[18] Dewey identified democracy with "such a development of man's nature as brings him into complete harmony with the universe of spiritual relations," – the perfection of both the individual and the social organism through the harmonious self-development of the powers and capacities of all the individuals in a society.[19]

In this fashion, Dewey was by the early 1890s a minor voice among American "social Christians" such as his Michigan colleague and friend Henry Carter Adams, who worried over the threat of industrial capitalism and the creation of a permanent wage-earning working class to American ideals of liberty and equality, and couched their concern in the language of a social gospel. Raised by a fiercely evangelical mother, Dewey remained an active member of the Congregational Church throughout his years at Michigan, where he worked with George Morris to ensure that the philosophy department was "pervaded with a spirit of religious

belief, unaffected, pure and independent."[20] He lectured regularly to the Student Christian Association and taught Bible classes at his local church. Like other social Christian intellectuals, he argued that "there is no need to beat about the bush in saying that democracy is not in reality what it is in name until it is industrial, as well as civil and political," and concluded that "the idea of democracy, the ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity, represent a society in which the distinction between the spiritual and the secular has ceased, and as in Greek theory, as in the Christian theory of the Kingdom of God, the church and the state, the divine and the human organization of society are one."[21]

Alice apparently did not approve of these sentiments, and she effectively put pressure on Dewey's conjunction of Christianity and democracy. Raised by free thinkers, she was decidedly not a member of the Student Christian Association. As her daughter put it, Dewey "acquired from her the belief that a religious attitude was indigenous in natural experience, and that theology and ecclesiastical institutions had benumbed rather than promoted it."[22] By 1892 Dewey had made democracy the whole substance of a now barely theistic faith. "It is in democracy, the community of ideas and interests through community of action," he declared, "that the incarnation of God in man (man, that is to say as organ of universal truth) becomes a living, present thing, having its ordinary and natural sense."[23] When Dewey and his family moved to Chicago in 1894, he let his church membership lapse and, much to the chagrin of his mother, refused to send his children to Sunday school. By the end of the decade, even the bare theism was gone, and his democratic faith was wholly secular.

POPULISM

The interest in social and political affairs that Dewey developed under Alice's urging in the late 1880s not only pushed him into the ranks of social Christian intellectuals, but also put him in touch with the related strains of radical populism that coursed through the American political landscape at the time. This radical populist political milieu, I would say, was the second of three important sets of surroundings "animated by the democratic spirit" that played a role in the origins of Dewey's democratic faith and left a permanent deposit in it.

Dewey read and admired Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888), and read and admired even more Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* (1879). George, he later said, was among the greatest thinkers since Plato, and the finest of American social philosophers.[24] But it was Dewey's face-to-face relationship with a much more obscure 1880s radical, Franklin Ford, that had the greatest impact on him at the time.

Ford, who might best be described as an itinerant journalist, was an editor in the early 1880s of *Bradstreet's*, the New York commercial newspaper. Disgusted by the subservience of his employer and other newspapers to the interests of their advertisers, he quit his job and developed a plan for a national "sociological newspaper" that would replace the scattered facts reported by ordinary newspapers with an analysis of the deeper social trends that gave these facts genuine meaning and significance. He had little luck winning the support of other journalists, and in 1888 he turned to the universities. His success here was indifferent as well until, as he put it, "I got to John Dewey."[25]

Unlike George and Bellamy, Ford was less interested in democratizing the control of the means of production than the control of the means of communication. His vision rested on a belief that the key to social justice in America was a radical reorganization of the production and distribution of knowledge. The reformer's task was one of freeing the American people, whom Ford referred to as the "Representative Slaves," from the "class interest which found its profit in keeping the common fact covered up." Progress toward a cooperative commonwealth rested on the "socialization of intelligence." The agency for this reconstruction of society was to be a powerful corporation that Ford called the "Intelligence Trust." This trust – an organization of intellectuals and journalists – would create a giant central clearinghouse of information and analysis, and through its own publications and the material it sold to newspapers throughout the country, it would provide the public with the knowledge it needed to free itself from slavery and conduct its affairs democratically. By making the truth its business, the Intelligence Trust would put publications serving narrow class interests out of business. "In place of discussing 'socialism,'" Ford said, "we put out in the rightful sense of the word, the socialistic newspaper – the organ of the whole."[26]

Dewey was enormously excited by Ford's ideas, for they resonated with his own developing political philosophy, which also put a premium on the "socialization of intelligence." The egalitarian distribution of knowledge, he argued, was at least as important to democracy as the egalitarian distribution of wealth, and as long as it was controlled by class interest, "democracy is still untried."

Alice shared Dewey's enthusiasm, and Dewey tried to convince other academics such as Adams and William James of the merits of Ford's schemes. In 1892 he and Ford began planning a prototype of the "sociological newspaper" that they called *Thought News*. But when the local press got wind of their project and savagely lampooned it, Dewey got cold feet and backed away from the collaboration. Ford bitterly broke with Dewey and charged him with cowardice. Dewey much later remembered the episode as "an overenthusiastic project which we had not the means or the time – and doubtless not the ability to carry through," an idea "too advanced for the maturity of those who had the idea in mind."[27]

But if Dewey thereafter muted the utopian impulses he felt in the late 1880s and early 1890s, they never entirely dissipated. He continued to look to George's petty-bourgeois radicalism for inspiration as he struggled late in life to define a "socialism that is not state socialism."[28] And the hopes that Ford stimulated to "transform philosophy somewhat by introducing a little newspaper business into it" no doubt guided his longtime role as a regular contributor to the *New Republic*.[29] Dewey made Ford's call for the "socialization of intelligence" very much his own, and elements of the visionary "Intelligence Trust" echoed in his later calls for a wedding of engaged social scientific inquiry and artful journalism. Democracy, Dewey declared in 1927, "will have its consummation when free social inquiry is indissolubly wedded to the art of full and moving communication."[30]

CHICAGO

If Dewey's democratic faith emerged in Ann Arbor, it was cemented in Chicago. Dewey's encounter with the social and political maelstrom of this extraordinary city in the 1890s was the third decisive context in the making of this democratic philosopher.

Chicago was the prototypical metropolis of industrializing America. The city's population had grown rapidly from a half million in 1880 to over a million in 1890, and by 1900 it would reach nearly 1.7 million. Much of this increase was due to an enormous influx of immigrants; in 1890 three-fourths of the city's population was made up of the foreign-born and their children. The cultural landscape of the city was shaped by class as well as ethnicity and stretched from lavish lakeside mansions to the sweatshops and tenements of the West Side, where Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr had established Hull House in 1889. All the pathologies and possibilities of urban life were on full display in Chicago in the 1890s, and rapacious entrepreneurs and corrupt politicians struggled with visionary reformers for control of the city's destiny.

Dewey was eager to join this struggle. In Chicago, he told Alice shortly after he arrived to take up his duties at the University of Chicago in the summer of 1894:

> every conceivable thing solicits you; the town seems filled with problems holding out their hands and asking somebody to please solve them – or else dump them in the lake. I had no conception that things could be so much more phenomenal and objective than they are in a country village, and simply stick themselves at you, instead of leaving you to think about them. The first effect is pretty paralyzing, the after effect is stimulating – at least, subjectively so, and maybe that is all chaos is in the world for, and not to be really dealt with. But after all you can't really get rid feeling here that there is a "method" and if you could only get hold of it things could be so tremendously straightened out.

Think of Chicago, he advised Alice, as "hell turned loose, and yet not hell any longer, but simply material for a new creation."[31]

It was the practical work of reformers such as Addams that, more than anything else, convinced Dewey that "Chicago is the greatest place in the world," and he rapidly established an important place for himself among them by virtue of his work as a spokesman for educational reform.[32] Dewey's activism centered on two sites: Hull House and the Laboratory School. It was there, amidst the immigrant working-class families of the nineteenth ward and the children at work and play in the Dewey School, that his democratic desires fully crystallized and he began to dress his moral convictions in a new set of clothes as he developed the instrumental logic that would earn him a place besides James and Peirce in the pragmatist pantheon.

Dewey's attachment to neo-Hegelianism was at bottom less religious than moral: he feared that without the Absolute the world would be denuded of purpose and hence of ethical possibility. But drawing on a functional psychology that owed much to James's magisterial *Principles of Psychology* (1890), he became convinced that one could formulate a Darwinian naturalism that provided if not for a purposeful universe at least for the emergence of human beings as a purposeful species, which was all that he believed the moral life required. From this perspective, mind was not the repository of a transcendent Reason or a passive receptacle of sense impressions but intelligence: an active, mediating, problem-solving capacity that had evolved in order to serve the interests of human survival and welfare. Idealism had well served Dewey's moral convictions, including his democratic faith, but now he found himself developing an original case for them in a fresh idiom, a "rational persuasion" largely of his own making. If Alice convinced Dewey to set Christ aside, he talked himself out of Hegel.[33]

At Hull House and the Laboratory School, as in his marriage, Dewey proved to his credit and to his enormous benefit to be open to learning from remarkable women. Like Alice Dewey, the residents at Hull House and the teachers at the Laboratory School put guts and stuffing into his democratic convictions. These women, Dewey said, were "superior in concrete intelligence to almost any man I know." He noted as well that "I have never met a man, no matter how more he knew of something than I did, that I couldn't see how he did it intellectually – I mean in a general way. In other words, his mind was essentially of the same order as my own. Only women have ever given really intellectual surprises; I'll be darned if I can see how they do it – but they do."[34]

Dewey arrived in Chicago from Ann Arbor in the midst of the Pullman strike, and he quickly discovered that his deep sympathies for the striking railroad men and their leader, Eugene V. Debs, were not widely shared at the university or among the city's respectable classes generally.[35] Dewey told Alice in the fall of 1894 that it had not taken long for him to understand "how 'anarchistic' (to use the current term here) our ideas and especially feelings are."[36] Like the rest of the faculty, Dewey learned to take his cues about what could and could not be said and done about class conflict from the fate of economics professor Edward Bemis, who was fired by President

William Rainey Harper in 1895 for his vocal support of labor. Dewey became decidedly circumspect in print and in the classroom, careful not to "rasp the feelings" of those "exercising the capitalistic function."[37]

But Hull House was a place where Dewey could speak more freely, and Jay Martin exaggerates only a little when he says that it became his "new church."[38] Addams and Dewey shared a similar democratic ethos, and the formulation that each offered of it echoed and reinforced that of the other. She insisted that settlement work was not charity. Again and again, she repeated what was for her (and Dewey) a crucial distinction between doing good *to* or *for* other people and doing good *with* them. Hull House was a collaborative, experimental bridging of class cultures, not philanthropy. Philanthropists practiced the former and "so long as they are 'good to people,' rather than 'with them,' they are bound to accomplish a large amount of harm." She noted that "It is so easy for the good and powerful to think that they can rise by following the dictates of conscience by pursuing their own ideals, leaving those ideals unconnected with the consent of their fellow-men." But this way, she warned, lay disaster. "We have learned to say that the good must be extended to all of society before it can be held secure by any one person or any one class," she said. "But we have not yet learned to add to that statement, that unless all men and classes contribute to a good, we cannot even be sure that it is worth having."[39]

If Hull House was Dewey's democratic church in Chicago, the Laboratory School was home to his own reform mission (and that of his wife, who served as the school's principal). In his ethical writings, both before and after his pragmatic turn, Dewey argued that individuals achieved self-realization by utilizing their peculiar talents to contribute to the well-being of their community, and that democratic communities were those that best fostered this coincidence of individual and public good. Hence the critical task of democratic education was to help children develop the character that would enable them to achieve self-realization as fully participatory members of a democratic society.

But if the school was to foster the social spirit in children and develop democratic character, Dewey argued, it had to abandon individualistic methods and organize itself as a cooperative community. To educate for democracy, Dewey concluded, the school had to

become "an institution to which the child is, for the time, to live – to be a member of a community life in which he feels that he participates, and to which he contributes."[40] Building such a community in the "Dewey School" was his aim and that of the teachers with whom he worked, and despite its brief lifespan (1896–1904), the evidence suggests that they made considerable headway.[41] Perhaps the most radical of the many radical features of the Laboratory School curriculum was its effort to build social relationships between all concerned that would prefigure a democratized workplace.

But prefigurative democratic community was not a budget priority at the University of Chicago. And when Harper tried to limit Alice's tenure at the school following its cost-efficient merger with another school whose teachers feared their jobs would be at stake should she remain as principal, Dewey refused to compromise and resigned his professorship.

When Dewey left Chicago for New York in 1904, he did not, of course, abandon the work he began there. Indeed, I have argued elsewhere at length that the best way to see the remaining fifty years of his career as a whole is as a steady thickening and extension of the effort begun in Ann Arbor and Chicago to convince himself and others that his passion for democracy could exhibit itself as a reasonable persuasion.

The encouraging nods Dewey offered democracy in this half-century were not only practical, in his unremitting commitment to educational reform and radical politics, but also philosophical, in his determined efforts to develop a naturalistic metaphysics and an instrumental logic of inquiry that might ground democratic community. In texts such as *Experience and Nature* and *The Quest for Certainty* he offered up a metaphysics in which democracy could be estimated a possibility if not a certainty: a reasonable regulative ideal in a hazardous world in which, he admitted, such ideals often came to grief. In his *Logic* and other contributions to a theory of inquiry, he forged an argument for democracy as an epistemological ideal that conjoined the search for truth with participatory, egalitarian deliberation. The "master burden" of Dewey's philosophy, as George Santayana observed unsympathetically yet accurately, was "a profound sympathy with the enterprise of life in all lay directions, in its technical and moral complexity, and especially in its American form, where individual initiative, although still demanded and prized, is

quickly subjected to overwhelming democratic control." His was "the pragmatism of the people, dumb and instinctive in them, and struggling in him to a labored but radical expression."[42]

Yet in leaving Chicago, Dewey gave up a great deal for Alice. He would never again have a laboratory like the Dewey School, an ongoing human community in which his philosophical anthropology, moral convictions, and political ideals could be put to a controlled test. For a pragmatist who insisted that the test of the truth of a proposition lay in its consequences in experience, this was quite a loss. Nonetheless, he could not do otherwise; it was her due. Without Alice, his democratic project might well have never begun.

NOTES

1. I would point, in particular, to *Reconstruction in Philosophy* and *The Quest for Certainty*. One American intellectual historian has fruitfully developed these underpinnings into what he calls a "pragmatic hermeneutics." See J. Kloppenberg, "Objectivity and Historicism: A Century of American Historical Writing," *American Historical Review* 94 (1989): 1011–1030; and "Pragmatism and the Practice of History," in *The Range of Pragmatism and the Limits of Philosophy*, ed. R. Schusterman (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 197–221.
2. J. Dewey, "Brief Studies in Realism" (1911), *MW* 6:120; J. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1929), *LW* 1:15–18; "Introduction to *Essays in Experimental Logic*" (1916), *MW* 10:331; J. Dewey, "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy" (1917), *MW* 10:46.
3. This opening biographical sketch draws on my entry on Dewey in *A Companion to American Thought*, ed. R. W. Fox and J. T. Kloppenberg (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp. 177–179. Fuller treatments of this life story are available in lengthy biographical studies by George Dykhuizen, Jay Martin, Steven Rockefeller, Alan Ryan, and myself.
4. R. Bourne, "Professor Dewey of Columbia on War's Social Results," *New York World*, 29 July 1917; R. Bourne, "Twilight of Idols" (1917), in *The Radical Will: Randolph Bourne Selected Writings*, ed. O. Hansen (New York: Urizen, 1977), pp. 336–347. For a full account of the Bourne–Dewey debate, see R. B. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 202–212, 367–373.
5. J. Gouinlock, *John Dewey's Philosophy of Value* (New York: Humanities Press, 1972), p. xi.

6. A fine account of the revival of pragmatism by another of the most significant neopragmatists is R. J. Bernstein, "The Resurgence of Pragmatism," *Social Research* 59 (1992): 813–40; and a substantial gathering of the returns of this revival can be found in *The Revival of Pragmatism*, ed. M. Dickstein (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998). See also R. B. Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 1–17.
7. J. Dewey, "Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us" (1939), *LW* 14:226–227, 230.
8. J. Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy" (1919), *MW* 11:43–44.
9. Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy," pp. 46–47.
10. Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy," p. 43.
11. Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy," p. 48.
12. See Westbrook, *Dewey and American Democracy*, pp. 319–373.
13. J. Dewey, "Philosophy and American National Life" (1904), *MW* 3:74.
14. Jane Dewey, "Biography of John Dewey," in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, ed. P. A. Schilpp, 2nd edn (New York: Tudor, 1951), pp. 20–21; W. Savage, "The Evolution of John Dewey's Philosophy of Experimentalism as developed at the University of Michigan" (Diss., University of Michigan, 1950), pp. 12–13; J. Suratt, "Alice Chipman Dewey" in *Notable American Women*, vol. I, ed. E. T. James (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 466–468; G. Dykhuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), p. 57.
15. Mabel Castle to Henry Castle, 31 December 1893, as quoted in N. Coughlan, *Young John Dewey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 92; M. Eastman, "John Dewey," *Atlantic* (December 1941), 678.
16. A claim that can be made with greater confidence now that Dewey's *Collected Works* are available on a searchable CD-ROM.
17. J. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy" (1888), *EW* 1:248. Discussions with Alice may have played a role in the making of this essay. Plato's *Republic* serves as Dewey's aristocratic foil in the argument, and he and Alice had apparently discussed the text earlier. John Dewey to Alice Chipman, 1885.09.15 (00001), *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, vol. 1, ed. Larry Hickman (Charlottesville: InteLex, 2005).
18. See J. Dewey, "The Philosophy of Thomas Hill Green" (1889), *EW* 3:14–35; Westbrook, *Dewey and American Democracy*, pp. 13–51; A. Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: Norton, 1995), pp. 85–99.
19. Dewey, "Ethics of Democracy," p. 241.
20. Dykhuizen, *Dewey*, p. 47.

21. Dewey, "Ethics of Democracy," pp. 246, 250. On the social Christian intellectuals and Dewey's relationship to them, see Westbrook, *Democratic Hope*, pp. 78–83.
22. Jane Dewey, "Biography," p. 21. *A Common Faith* might then be read as a tribute to Alice Dewey.
23. J. Dewey, "Christianity and Democracy" (1892), *EW* 4:9.
24. J. Dewey, "A Great American Prophet" (1934), *LW* 9:102–106; "An Appreciation of Henry George" (1928), *LW* 3:359–360.
25. F. Ford, "Draft of Action" (1892); copy in the library of California State University, Fullerton. For a full account of Dewey's encounter with Ford, see Westbrook, *Dewey and American Democracy*, pp. 51–58.
26. Ford, "Draft of Action," p. 8.
27. Dewey to W. Savage, May 30, 1949, as quoted in Savage, "Evolution of Dewey's Philosophy," p. 150.
28. See Westbrook, *Democratic Hope*, pp. 121–123, 133–136.
29. J. Dewey, "He's Planned No Revolution," *Detroit Tribune* (April 13, 1892).
30. J. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (1927), *LW* 2:350.
31. John Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey and Children 1894.08.25 (00178), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, vol. 1.
32. John Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey 1894.10.07 (00204), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey*, vol. 1.
33. Although, as Dewey himself readily admitted, not entirely. See J. A. Good, *A Search for Unity in Diversity: The "Permanent Hegelian Deposit" in the Philosophy of John Dewey* (Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).
34. John Dewey to Scudder Klyce, 1915.07.05 (03542), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey*, vol. 1.
35. See Westbrook, *Democratic Hope*, pp. 74–98.
36. John Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey 1894.07.16 (00160), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey*, vol. 1.
37. J. Dewey, "Academic Freedom" (1902), *MW* 2:59.
38. J. Martin, *The Education of John Dewey: A Biography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 164.
39. J. Addams, "A Modern Lear," in *The Social Thought of Jane Addams*, ed. Christopher Lasch (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), pp. 119, 122; and J. Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), p. 97. Compare J. Dewey and J. Tufts, *Ethics* (1908), *MW* 5:276–277.
40. J. Dewey, "Plan of Organization of the University Primary School," *EW* 5:224.

41. On the practices of the Laboratory School, see the account by two of its teachers: K. C. Mayhew and A. C. Edwards, *The Dewey School* (New York: Atherton, 1966).
42. On the democratic implications of Dewey's metaphysics, see Westbrook, *Dewey and American Democracy*, pp. 361–366; on his epistemological justification for democracy, see Westbrook, *Democratic Hope*, 175–200. G. Santayana, "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics" (1925), *LW* 3:370.

2 Dewey's epistemology

In *The Quest for Certainty*, Dewey described "the main problem of modern philosophy" as follows, "How is science to be accepted and yet the realm of values to be conserved."[1] He suggested that a solution to the problem would be found if the separation of theory and practice, presupposed by philosophy since the days of Plato, were overcome. That task, he believed, will be accomplished when the traditional spectator theory of knowledge is replaced by a theory that regards the knower of the world as an agent in that world. Such a theory will be a theory not of knowledge as fixed and immutable but rather of knowledge as the upshot of inquiry as seen in the experimental sciences; it will, he promised, "cancel the isolation of knowledge from overt action."[2]

Once knowledge is seen to be not only compatible with action but requiring action, it follows that the methods of inquiry that lead to knowledge in science are also the methods by which judgments of practice, and hence judgments of value, become known. Moreover, the methods of science are continuous with methods of inquiry in everyday life. Thus, somewhat surprisingly, Dewey, who sneered at an "alleged discipline of epistemology," found himself again and again developing, presenting, and defending his instrumental theory of knowledge. The central sources are the essays he collected in *Essays in Experimental Logic* (now scattered in several volumes of the *Middle Works of John Dewey*), *The Quest for Certainty*, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* and finally "Experience, Knowledge and Value" in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*.[3]

THE PROBLEM

Dewey's formulation of the problem calls for considerable elaboration. How do the discoveries of modern science call our values into

question? They do so only on a mistaken view of the relation of scientific objects (physical magnitudes, atoms, etc.) to the objects of everyday life – middle-sized objects, low-energy processes – what Dewey calls, sometimes, objects of use and enjoyment and, at other times, qualitative objects. Therefore, Dewey cites a second problem as equally central, namely, "the problem of the relation of physical science to the things of ordinary experience."[4]

Let us return, however, to "the main problem." Following Dewey's procedure, let us ask how the problem has arisen, and let us be guided by the fact that the popular version of the problem is said to be the conflict between science and religion. Before the rise of modern science most philosophers as well as everyone else took it for granted that the perceived qualities of things were indeed qualities of things, not mental entities in the mind of the perceiver. Indeed, things were distinguished from each other by their different qualities. Things were used or misused, enjoyed or suffered, sought or shunned. People recognized the fragility of the world they experienced, including the fragility of the goods they pursued and the virtues of their fellows on which they relied. They sought certainty and stability. Since, in this world, good things do not last and good people die, they postulated another world – Plato's realm of Ideas, Christianity's God and his Heaven, the Absolute of the Idealists, etc. Knowledge of these transcendent entities was said to be acquired by reasoning that involved no action, by intuition or by revelation.

Today, we speak of a conflict between science and religion when, for example, religious people oppose the account of creation in the Bible to the teachings of modern astrophysics or to the theory of evolution. In contrast, according to Dewey, philosophers have been troubled by "the gap in kind which exists between the fundamental principles of the natural world and the reality of the values according to which mankind is to regulate its life."[5]

Dewey opposes here scientific realism – the view that our best physical theories are our best account of reality – to various types of idealism – the view that Truth, Beauty, Good have Being beyond the temporal existence of the common sense world or the world of science. The gap vanishes, Dewey maintains, when values are understood not as something to be known but rather as something that guides conduct, and when science is understood to provide the means to realize (in this temporal world) more efficiently, more

securely the things we value. In other words, when theory and practice are united.

More recently – say, for the past eighty years or so – the "gap" that some philosophers find is known as the fact–value dichotomy: that is, that while facts are objective and knowable, values are subjective or at best relative to a given culture. Dewey's argument is as relevant to this conception of the gap as that prevailing earlier and perhaps recently reemerging.

When Dewey rails against the separation of theory and practice and the undervaluing of the latter, he describes and criticizes views that were widely held at the time of his writing. Pure science was valued more highly than applied science in spite of the fact that applied science and technology were rapidly transforming the world. Today technology and applied science are valued beyond pure science, if comparative value is measured by the size of the investments governments are willing to make in these fields. In these circumstances, Dewey, I am sure, would have adjusted his rhetoric to emphasize the importance of pure science. Dewey not only understood that without advances in basic research applied science and technology come to a standstill, he cherished the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake just as he cherished the pursuit of beauty. In any case, it is a serious, though alas not uncommon, misreading of Dewey to say that he valued action over thought, practice over theory. In fact, he held them to be so interdependent that the question of the value of either in isolation makes no sense.

TRUTH

Let us see then how theory and practice are united in Dewey's theory of knowledge. According to Dewey, "thinking would not exist, and hence knowledge would not be found, in a world which presented no troubles."[6] This relatively early formulation hints at the instrumentalist theory of knowledge that he developed in the first decade of the last century and never abandoned thereafter. It makes clear that for Dewey "thinking" refers not to any kind of consciousness but only to what he calls reflective and inferential thinking. Such thinking occurs in inquiry, and "the outcome of competent and controlled inquiry" is knowledge or, as Dewey preferred to say, "warranted assertibility."[7] That expression, he felt, points to the process of

inquiry that provides the warrant for a knowledge claim. It also reminds us that the upshot of any particular inquiry is always provisional, subject to modification as the result of subsequent inquiry. Dewey gave credit to C. S. Peirce for this insight as well as for generally making inquiry a focal point of his logical studies.[8]

Because, for Dewey, knowledge is warranted assertibility, it is sometimes thought that he defined truth as warranted assertibility. Dewey must bear some of the blame for this misinterpretation, for in the index to the *Logic* we find under "truth" this: "defined 345n. See Assertibility Warranted." In the footnote referred to, Dewey says that the best definition of truth is that given by C. S. Peirce, namely, "The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed on by all who investigate is what we mean by truth, and the object represented by this opinion is the real." He then cites another passage from Peirce that elaborates the definition just stated. "Truth is that concordance of an abstract statement with the ideal limits toward which endless investigation would tend to bring scientific belief, which concordance the abstract statement may possess by virtue of the confession of its inaccuracy and one-sidedness, and this confession is an essential ingredient of truth."[9] Truth is not warranted assertibility, but we might say that it is the limit toward which assertions tend as they are increasingly more fully warranted by scientific investigation.

The Peirce–Dewey account of truth was scathingly criticized by Bertrand Russell who wondered why they believed that there is an "ideal limit to which endless investigation would tend to bring scientific belief."[10] He asked sarcastically whether the belief that such a limit exists is supposed to be an empirical generalization, an optimistic belief in human perfectibility, a prophecy, or a mere surmise concerning the opinions of ever cleverer scientists. What Russell ignores is that for both Peirce and Dewey the method of science is self-corrective or, as Dewey says, continuous. Thus human perfectibility or scientists becoming cleverer are beside the point.

Nevertheless, there may be no "ideal limit," no final "theory of everything," for various reasons, and even if there were such a theory, there would be many truths that would not be part of the final opinion. Neither scientific truths about particulars nor truths of everyday life, as, for example, that I am now writing these words on a computer, are part of the final opinion. Moreover, with respect to the latter and most, if not all, of the former truths, we do not care that

they are not part of the final opinion; they play their role for us now. Dewey would say that they are effective or inadequate means in the course of a particular inquiry, and that the predicates "true" or "false" do not apply to these propositions. While I agree with Dewey on the role such propositions play, I also think that they are true or false.

In the introduction to the *Essays in Experimental Logic* Dewey likened the correspondence said to hold between a (true) thought and reality to the relation between an invention and the need it is intended to serve. A true hypothesis, one might say, is like the key that fits a lock; it enables us to move from an indeterminate situation into one that is determinate, not (*pace* Russell) from feelings of doubt to feelings of certainty.

Dewey's example of a man lost in the woods may clarify this last conception. The man, it is said, must have a true idea of his environment. Dewey points out that the man does not need an idea of the perceived environment; he needs an idea of the wider environment that contains his home and other unperceived elements. Concerning this idea Dewey writes, "It is not some little psychical entity or piece of consciousness-stuff, *but is the interpretation of the locally present environment in reference to its absent portion*."[11] This idea is, as Dewey points out, a plan of action. And if the man carries out the plan and after some while finds himself at home, he may say that his idea agreed with reality. This is the only sense Dewey can give to the notion of an agreement between idea and reality. Only by acting upon an idea can we discover whether it is adequate or not and how we might improve it. Moreover, only consequences that are deliberately sought are relevant to its truth or falsity. Thus, though the man might be pleasantly surprised to encounter his wife by the way, this is irrelevant to the truth of his idea, while encountering a landmark he had anticipated is relevant. This account of truth, as far as it goes, is entirely in agreement with ordinary usage; but it is, of course, neither a theory nor a definition of truth.

KNOWLEDGE

It is time to return to Dewey's theory of knowledge. I have suggested that Dewey's theory of knowledge is in fact his theory of inquiry, his "logic," although I acknowledge that his theory of inquiry is more

than a theory of knowledge. It includes his metaphysics, his theory of language, his theory of mind and his philosophy of science. Again and again Dewey points out that there is continuity between inquiry in science and inquiry in ordinary life. While I intend to emphasize the latter, it will be impossible to avoid referring to the former. However, inquiry in science is the theme of Isaac Levi's chapter in this volume.

Although in the opening chapter of his *Logic* Dewey followed Peirce in holding that inquiry is prompted by doubt, his preferred formulation is that "*Inquiry is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole.*"[12] While doubt is subjective, an indeterminate situation is objective, and that is important. Dewey rejects the absolute idealist's notion of knowledge as a state of mind. Knowing is a relation between a world and a self (an intelligent organism) who is not merely a knower but stands in multiple relations to multiple things in that world: for example, as an eater of fish or a maker of shoes. Dewey speaks of an indeterminate *situation* because we always experience things or events in a wider context, a situation. To be sure, we generally focus attention on a particular item, but it is the item-in-that-situation to which we respond appropriately or inappropriately. A situation is indeterminate if it may develop in more than one way depending on what a suitably placed agent may do.

The upshot of inquiry is here said to be a unified or determinate situation, one whose further development can be confidently predicted, or a situation that is understood, or a situation that is enjoyed (or suffered). The inquirer who brings this about is said to have knowledge; thus Dewey also says that knowledge is the outcome of controlled inquiry. Such knowledge is mediated knowledge, and for Dewey it is the only kind of knowledge. In contrast, many philosophers have held that some a priori propositions are intuited: that is, known immediately. Many philosophers have held that the objects of perception, whatever they may be, are known immediately. Dewey denies that there is any immediate knowledge. I shall consider each case in turn.

Immediate knowledge

Let us begin with some general considerations. Dewey is well aware that his denial of immediate knowledge runs counter both to

common interpretations of acknowledged facts and to an argument as old as Aristotle's writings. The argument holds that inference leads to known conclusions only if it begins with known premises. Hence, to avoid an infinite regress, there must be premises that are known immediately. Since known premises and conclusions are true, Dewey's first response is to point out that true conclusions can follow from premises that are false: that is, not known. But that reply is not adequate, for such conclusions, though true, are not known, at least not on the basis of such an inference alone. Dewey's more adequate response is to point to the history of science. Again and again quite inaccurate hypotheses have stimulated research that disclosed more fruitful evidence. Such hypotheses are not known, hence not immediately known, yet the ultimate result of the research they prompt is knowledge in Dewey's, though perhaps not in Aristotle's, sense. In short, the existence of immediate knowledge cannot be proven by what purports to be an indispensability argument.

Be that as it may, there are certain facts that seem to make a prima facie case for immediate knowing. We are not newborns; we bring to every inquiry the results of previous inquiries, and these are used without further reflection. "This immediate *use* of objects known in consequence of previous mediation is readily confused with immediate knowledge."[13] An example, to which I shall return below, is the case of recognizing a previously perceived object. Thus we say, quite correctly, "I recognized him immediately" and "I saw at a glance that it was a Golden Retriever" while ready to agree that the knowledge is the result of prior experience.

Another example of seemingly immediate but actually mediated knowledge is this. Dewey notes that in the course of inquiry certain estimates, appraisals, or evaluations occur. Data are judged to be relevant, or reliable; certain theories are judged to be applicable to the case in question; suggested hypotheses may be judged to be plausible, etc. Dewey does not emphasize that these are value judgments, but in fact he points here to what a later philosopher called the entanglement of facts and values.[14] That entanglement is itself an aspect of the unity of theory and practice that Dewey seeks to establish. However, the relevance of mentioning these appraisals here is this. "As soon as it is forgotten that they are means, and their value is determined by their efficacy as operative means, they appear to be objects of immediate knowledge instead of being means of attaining

knowledge."[15] I find this last remark puzzling; such judgments of epistemic value seem to me to be obviously the result of reflection. What Dewey wants to deny is that these "means of attaining knowledge" are *knowledge*, hence a fortiori not immediate knowledge. Like the particular propositions mentioned above, appraisals are more or less adequate to the task at hand.

A priori knowledge

Inquiry, as we have already had occasion to remark, is continuous. In every inquiry it may be taken for granted that many propositions are not the subject of *this* inquiry. For example, one takes it for granted that the instruments used are reliable, and that one is justified in making use of already well-established scientific theories. Everyone knows and agrees that these propositions are empirical and that knowledge of them is the result of earlier inquiries: that is, it is not immediate, however immediately it now comes to mind.

But there are other propositions: for example, that space is three-dimensional, that other philosophers have taken to be known a priori, but that Dewey takes to be warranted by thousands of years of successful use in inquiry. They seem to us (adult human beings) immediately known because we too have used them already in numerous inquiries. And yet new situations may arise which challenge these received truths, as Einstein's theory of general relativity challenges the "a priori" truth that space is Euclidean. Failure to be prepared for such an eventuality will block inquiry.

Still, one may want to ask, "What about mathematical truths?" Dewey's short answer is that mathematical theories from simple arithmetic to the most abstract are means, highly abstract means, that enable thinking: that is, inference. The axioms of a mathematical theory are not immediately known truths; "they are postulates adopted because of what follows from them."[16] In other words, they are neither truths nor objects of knowledge. Nevertheless Dewey appreciated mathematics also for its own sake, as the following shows. "Mathematics and formal logic thus mark highly specialized branches of intellectual industry, whose working principles are very similar to those of works of fine art. The trait that strikingly characterizes them is combination of freedom with rigor – freedom with respect to development of new operations and ideas; rigor with

respect to formal compossibilities."[17] From the perspective of a theory of inquiry, mathematical concepts and theories are of interest when they find application in everyday life, in physics, or in other sciences. But Dewey recognized and appreciated the play of mathematical ideas just as he appreciated the play of works of art, and the importance of so-called pure science.

PERCEPTION

In his reply to his critics in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, written in 1938, Dewey remarks that he has spent the last thirty-five years of his life developing his present philosophical views. Neither his critics in that volume nor he himself seem to take any interest in his earlier idealism, except as one of a number of views he opposes. I shall follow in his footsteps and deal only with his pragmatist views.[18]

It is useful to begin with Dewey's 1905 essay "The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism."[19] In that paper Dewey asserts – this is the postulate of immediate empiricism – that *things are what they are experienced as*. Different people will experience the same thing differently; thus a child finds a more or less triangular stone with rather sharp edges, an archeologist finds an arrowhead. Their experiences differ, but the difference is not one between "Reality" and "Appearance," and both may experience the object as useful for digging a hole in the sand.

It follows from the postulate that things are what they are *known* as. But, unless all experiencing is knowing, it does *not* follow that Reality is known by an all-knower, or even known piecemeal by various finite knowers. If knowing is but one sort of experiencing among others, as Dewey holds, then we can ask what sort of experiencing it is, or how a thing as known differs from that thing as, say, enjoyed. For example, a noise startles and frightens me; it is a fearsome thing. I investigate and find that it is made by a window shade flapping in the wind; it is no longer fearsome.

Dewey emphatically makes two points here: (1) the earlier experience is not a knowing (or cognizing) experience; it would be incorrect to describe it as "I know that I am frightened by a noise." The correct description is just "I am frightened by a noise." The later experience is a knowing experience, correctly described as, "Now I know the flapping window shade makes the noise." In short, knowledge results

from inquiry. (2) The postulate of immediate empiricism offers a method of philosophical analysis that, like the method of science, sends one to experience.

What then do we experience in our various experiences? The short answer is "objects of use and enjoyment," a phrase that includes misuse and suffering or undergoing. To put it another way, Dewey is a naïve realist in the sense that what we experience or perceive are the things of the commonsense world. He is emphatically opposed to what we now call an interface conception of perception, whether or not the interpolated entities are thought of as mental, physical, or neutral.

Perception, for Dewey, is a physical interaction between an organism and its environment. Every word here requires comment. Perception is an inter*action*: that is perceivers are not spectators, not passive receivers of impressions or sense-data or presentations *of* their environment; perceivers are agents/patients *in* their environment. Again, perceivers are organisms, more or less intelligent organisms, not minds. Such a perceiver may enjoy or suffer, may manipulate or undergo being manipulated by some feature of the environment without thought. If so, there is perception but not knowledge. Thus one may enjoy "without thinking" the sensation in one's throat as one drinks a glass of cool water on a hot summer day. Even when there is thinking – when, for example, one is making an effort with the aid of a reference book to identify an unfamiliar plant – there are numerous things in one's perceptual field that one does not think about or know.

Why is it important for Dewey to insist that perception is not per se cognition? Because that view leads to intractable problems. Consider the case of one's perception of a distant star. From the point of view of what Dewey calls naïve realism – that is, from his point of view – there is no problem; there is a physical process that began light years ago with light emitted by the star and ends with the light now impinging on my retina and setting certain internal processes in motion. This happens whether or not I know anything about the speed of light or the processes within my body. Again, one may be awe-struck by the starry heavens, one may use the stars to navigate, or they may be merely part of the total situation in which one talks philosophy with one's friend. Of course, nothing just said denies that there is a science of astronomy, and that astronomers have knowledge of (some) stars.

Dewey raises the following difficulties with rival views: Idealists hold that the seen light is a mental event. If so, Dewey wonders, would a photograph of the star be something psychical? Presentative realists (Dewey's label) accept the physical explanation (that light travels at a finite speed), yet they treat perceiving as a kind of knowing: that is, as something other than a simple physical–biological event. What then, according to these realists, are we said to know when we see a star? The star is the cause of knowledge, but the seen light seems to be the object known. Yet the star is said to be *the* real object, contrasting it to the "less real" seen light that merely "presents" the star. Again, were one to claim that one *knows* the star, one would have to know the velocity of the emitted light (and any other characteristics of the star), but these are not known in perception. In other words, according to Dewey, the fact that we see distant stars, together with the claim that to see a thing is to know the thing, and that to know a thing is to know some characteristic of it, gives rise to intractable problems. Therefore, Dewey rejects the hypothesis that perceiving is knowing, acknowledging, however, that his own view is also a hypothesis.

Dewey appeals to ordinary, that is, non-philosophical, understanding as evidence for his hypothesis, i.e. the hypothesis that perceiving is not cognitive. "The plain man, for a surety, does not regard noises heard, lights seen, etc., as mental existences; but neither does he regard them as things *known*."[20] The point is not that the ordinary person does not *say* that he knows the noise, i.e. that he knows the flapping of the window shade; rather, the point is that the attitude of ordinary people to these things is not that of a knower. "He is in the attitude of a liker or a hater, a doer or an appreciator. When he takes the attitude of a knower he begins to inquire."[21]

A further difficulty with the spectator theory of knowing is the following. If our only relationship to the world is that of a spectator, there is no way we can tell whether something merely appears to have a certain quality or whether it actually has that quality. In other words, skepticism concerning the external world is then inescapable.

What then is the relation of perceptions to "the unquestionable case of knowledge, the logical or inferential case"? Dewey replies,

> They [perceptions] are the sole ultimate data, the sole media, of inference to all natural objects and processes. While we do not, in any intelligible or verifiable sense, know *them*, we know all things that we do know *with* or

by them. They furnish the only ultimate evidence of the existence and nature of the objects which we infer, and they are the sole ultimate checks and tests of the inferences.[22]

Furthermore, in daily life perceptions function as signs of other perceptions to come, and where this occurs regularly and frequently, the sign-value may become the dominant quality of the perception; e.g. certain noises become language; familiar objects are recognized at a glance. "Thus, *for practical purposes*, many perceptual events are cases of knowledge; that is, they have been used as such so often that the habit of so using them is established or automatic."[23]

It would, however, be clearer to say, as Dewey does say in *Logic*, that we *apprehend* the things of the commonsense world and their qualities and that we *understand* a word or a concept. We do, as adults, directly understand what the common words of our language mean; that understanding is acquired as a child learns its mother tongue. In just this way, according to Dewey, past repeated experience with a thing will enable us to recognize it "at a glance" as, say, binoculars, or to identify the noise immediately as a flapping window shade. Such apprehension may be followed by an immediate response – the binoculars are used to determine whether a distant object is our long-awaited friend. Or the object may be simply noted as part of an inquiry, but in the latter case there is no guarantee that it will prove to be relevant.

What then do we apprehend? We apprehend the objects and the qualities of the objects of the commonsense world. We apprehend their primary, secondary, and tertiary qualities. For it is by their qualities that we distinguish one object from another. As already mentioned, we do not apprehend objects in isolation but rather as parts of an environment: an extended spatio-temporal field that is usually taken for granted. For Dewey, a theory of knowledge will fail if it takes isolated objects as data, as *given* in experience, rather than as *taken*, as the result of conceptual or physical manipulation of the indeterminate situation. As given, objects stand in multiple relations to each other and to us.

One final word concerning perception and concerning the failure of other theories of knowledge is in order. Dewey responded at length to Bertrand Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World: As a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy*.[24] In that work Russell asked

whether the existence of anything other than our data of sense can be inferred from their existence. Russell then offered a complex construction – a correlation of correlations of sense-data – as equivalent to a physical object – say, a table. Dewey pointed out that in the very statement of the problem as well as in the construction of his response Russell repeatedly takes for granted the spatio-temporal world that he supposedly called into question.

Moreover, psychology has rejected the assumption that infants experience discrete objects of sense (color patches, sounds, etc.).

> According to Mr. James, for example, the original datum is large but confused and specific sensible qualities represent the result of discrimination ... That knowledge grows from a confusedly experienced external world to a world experienced as ordered and specified would then be the teaching of psychological science, but at no point would the mind be confronted with the problem of inferring a world.[25]

Dewey concludes, "It is not the common-sense *world* which is doubtful, or which is inferential, but *common-sense* as a complex of beliefs about specific things and relations *in* the world. Hence never in any actual procedure of inquiry do we throw the existence of the world into doubt, nor can we do so without self-contradiction."[26]

SCIENCE AND EXPERIENCE

Let us recall that for Dewey the central problem of philosophy is to restore "integration and cooperation" between "beliefs about the nature of things *due to natural science* [and] beliefs about *values* – using that word to designate whatever is taken to have rightful authority in the direction of conduct."[27] He sees another "main problem" as "the problem of the relation of physical science to the things of ordinary experience."[28] The problems are, of course, related since the things we desire, enjoy, and value are the things of ordinary experience. The problems exist, Dewey believes, because of a long tradition, already mentioned above, which valued so-called pure knowledge (or knowing that something is the case) over applied knowledge (or knowing how to do something). Or we might say that the tradition valued thinking over doing, the "activity" of the leisure class over that of the common people. In a contemporary version, what is known by scientists is taken to be what is real as opposed to

the less real qualities of commonsense objects. Or, again, the tradition models knowing on seeing, where it is characteristic of seeing that it leaves the seen object untouched.

In contrast, Dewey will model knowing: that is, coming to know, on the procedures of the experimental natural sciences. With the rise of modern science the notion of experience underwent a change – or rather we have now two notions of experience, for the older one also persists. What is known "by experience" in the older notion is a haphazard collection based on fortuitous discoveries; it is not, properly speaking, knowledge, since its objects (what is said to be known) are not understood. In the newer notion what is known by experience is what is learned from deliberately conducted experiments. Such knowledge is relatively stable – the experiments can be repeated by any competent person – but only *relatively*, for we must not forget that scientists are always willing to revise their beliefs in the light of new evidence.

Dewey notes three traits of experimental inquiry: (1) experimentation involves doing, manipulation of the environment or, at least, of the experimenter's relation to it; (2) experimentation is guided by ideas: that is, by hypotheses relevant to the problem that prompted the inquiry; (3) "The outcome of the directed activity is the construction of a new empirical situation in which objects are differently related to each other, and such that the *consequences* of directed operation have the property of being *known*."[29]

Dewey contrasts Greek science, which fits comfortably with common sense since both are qualitative, with post-Galilean science which, he holds, abolished qualities as traits of scientific objects, thus giving rise to the "conflict and need for reconciliation between the scientific properties of the real and those which give moral authority."[30] The statement might be misread as holding that the properties which give moral authority are not properties of real things. That is not Dewey's intention. Only if one assumes that knowing is the only mode of experiencing, a view Dewey, as we have seen, emphatically rejected, would one be forced to conclude that, since scientific objects have no qualities, the world is valueless. "A philosophy which holds that we experience things as they really are apart from knowing, and that knowledge is a mode of experiencing things which facilitates control of objects for purposes of non-cognitive experiences will come to a different conclusion."

Namely, it leads to the conclusion that "[physics] *substitutes data for objects*."[31] But this must not be understood ontologically as denuding the world of qualities. What Dewey is saying is, quite simply, that scientists measure things and that, for the most part, they deal with measured quantities, and with correlations between these.

Thus, if a sick person takes her temperature, she substitutes a datum for the quality of being hot, a datum that, together with other data, will be used by the physician to arrive at a diagnosis. That, in turn, enables the physician to prescribe a course of treatment that leads to the patient's recovery, or, alas, sometimes not. When the patient recovers, her recovery verifies (confirms) the diagnosis and the appropriateness of the treatment. In this case, quite literally, a problematic situation – a situation of imbalance, as Dewey likes to say – is transformed into a settled or balanced one. But the upshot of the inquiry – the healthy patient – is as qualitative as was the earlier feverish, uncomfortable one.

Data are something to be thought about; they are not the upshot of the inquiry. Measurement of change enables scientists to discover correlations of changes and thus to develop means to control change. But the point of all this is ultimately to secure enjoyment and prevent suffering, that is, consummatory not cognitive experiences.

Although Dewey is a naturalist and a naïve – that is, a commonsense realist – he is not a scientific realist, though neither is he a scientific antirealist (see below). We can, and in inquiry we do, abstract from the qualities of objects. Measurement, chemical analysis, taking x-rays are all ways of replacing an ordinary qualitative object by "data," *as subject-matter for inquiry*. The concepts we use in science, Dewey believed, following Bridgman, are "synonymous with the corresponding set of operations."[32] There is not a duplicate scientific world; there are only different ways of thinking about *the* world. "[T] he physical object, as scientifically defined, is not a duplicated real object, but is a statement, as numerically definite as is possible, of the relations between sets of changes the qualitative object sustains with changes in other things – ideally of all things with which interaction might under any circumstances take place."[33]

Dewey rejects the accusation that he is a scientific antirealist. When he said that the perceived and used table is the only table, he did not deny the existence of a swarm of molecules in rapid motion,

"but [only] the notion that the swarm somehow constitutes a ghostly kind of *table*."[34] Relative to different kinds of problems both the perceived table and the swarm of molecules may be objects of knowledge.

It would be beside the point to offer here a critique of operationalism. It is, by now, beyond dispute that it is too simple an account of the meaning of scientific concepts. Yet scientific inquiry can still be seen as leading from a problem that arises in the commonsense world to a solution that has application in that world and is verified by those applications. Thus, an appreciation of science, even of scientific research pursued for long periods entirely for its own sake, does not force one to deny the reality of the commonsense world. Even if only scientific inquiries lead to knowledge properly so called, we have, as Dewey tirelessly pointed out, other experiences, other interactions with a world that is as we experience it: that is, shot through with values.

JUDGMENTS OF PRACTICE

Dewey's second problem, that of the relation of scientific objects to the things of ordinary experience, has, I believe, been adequately answered. There remains the first problem, that of integrating "beliefs about the nature of things *due to natural science* [and] beliefs about *values* – using that word to designate whatever is taken to have rightful authority in the direction of conduct."[35] Here the emphasis is on "beliefs." Dewey provides multiple answers.

First, as we have seen again and again, he holds that the things of experience are as they are experienced: that is, things are frightful, soothing, repulsive, attractive, etc. just as they are blue or sweet, large or triangular. These are "real qualities of natural objects. This view forms the only complete and unadulterated realism."[36] That a thing is red does not suffice to identify it as a tulip; just because a thing is attractive does not suffice to identify it as good. But in both cases the experienced quality may prompt an inquiry that leads to the conclusion that the red thing is (or is not) a tulip and the attractive thing is (or is not) good. More will be said below about the second kind of inquiry.

Second, Dewey reminds us again that nature, or our situation in nature, is precarious although there are also stable elements. It is

precisely the combination of the stable and the precarious that enables us to intervene, to avert danger or secure safety: in short, to act to bring about a settled situation. Here, somewhat suddenly, Dewey remarks, "If it be admitted that knowing is something which occurs within nature, then it follows as a truism that knowing is an existential overt act."[37] If so, becoming known does something to or alters the object that becomes known. If so, knowledge is not – a point often made by Dewey – knowledge of an antecedent reality. In fact, the object of knowledge is always a hypothesis concerning the future.

Surely, this must be an exaggeration. Donald Piatt, of whose interpretation Dewey thought highly, remarked that while one must acknowledge that in an experimental process one alters antecedent existence, one must also admit that "the purpose of knowledge in using experiment in science and largely in practical life is to discover what exists and antecedently existed apart from the experiment."[38] Piatt believed that a careful reading of Dewey's texts would support his contention.

Let us return to Dewey's claim that knowing is an overt existential act. It would have been clearer had he said that coming to know, inquiring, is an overt existential act, indeed a series of such acts. The acts performed in the course of an inquiry are "intelligent": that is, they aim to realize a purpose – the transformation of an indeterminate situation into a determinate one – and they are directed by knowledge of relevant laws of nature and of facts particular to the situation in question. What has just been said is true primarily of inquiry in physics and other natural sciences. It is, however, the model for all successful inquiry and for all successful attempts to solve a problem. Hence, it is a model also for social and political problems. Dewey bemoans the fact that in these areas we fall far short of the ideal, and that our practice is regulated by "tradition, self-interest and accidental circumstances."[39]

Human life, we have said, is shot through with intelligent action. Such action follows upon a "judgment of practice": for example, "I had better take the bus," "He should spend more time on his studies," "It is wise to exercise," etc. Such judgments, Dewey remarks, are judgments about an incomplete *situation* in which the agent is simply one feature among many that are relevant to further developments. Because moral judgments have been thought to be exclusively about the agent while judgments of practice are about

an agent, a situation and the agent in that situation, Dewey feels compelled to say, "If the genuine existence of such propositions [judgments of practice] be admitted, the only question about moral judgments is whether or no they are cases of practical judgments as the latter have been defined – a question of utmost importance for moral theory."[40]

In contrast to mere descriptions of a given situation, practical judgments are a factor in its development. They suppose that there is a better and a worse outcome (or several) and assert that a certain course of action will contribute to the better. They also presuppose or contain an account of the resources for and obstacles to the proposed course of action and its end-in-view.

Dewey holds that any factual proposition that is made the basis of an inference becomes thereby a hypothetical proposition: that is, open to verification or falsification by the occurrence or non-occurrence of the consequences it predicts. Dewey concludes that, therefore, the truth or falsehood of a practical judgment is constituted by the outcome of intelligent action in accordance with it. In other words, for judgments of practice truth is verification. In fact, Dewey goes further than this, at least tentatively. "We may frame at least a hypothesis that all judgments of fact have reference to a determination of courses of action to be tried and to the discovery of means for their realization."[41] In short, any factual statement may be action-guiding, and any action-guiding statement is verified/falsified by the outcome of intelligent action based on it. While I would not wish to identify truth with verification, and what has just been said is far too simplistic to fit most cases in which judgments of practice are to be evaluated – consider evaluating the latest immigration policy of the United States government – the significant point, it seems to me, is that judgments of practice are capable of confirmation/disconfirmation. Since judgments of practice are value judgments (judging a goal as worth pursuing, or a means as promising success), at least such value judgments are knowable in the same way as any other empirical proposition.

Can one say that all judgments of value are practical? Dewey distinguishes, usefully, between experiencing something as a good and judging it to be good, just as we distinguish between railroad tracks experienced as converging and judged to be parallel. Dewey was a behaviorist: he characterizes finding a thing good, as opposed to

judging it to be good, as "hanging on to it, dwelling upon it, welcoming it and acting to perpetuate its presence, taking delight in it," and having a non-cognitive attitude toward it.[42] In contrast, judging that a thing is good is like any other judgment, e.g. like judging that it is a horse or a case of scarlet fever. Dewey described this distinction variously as distinguishing prizing from appraising, or valuing from evaluating.

What then is the outcome of an inquiry into values? Dewey wrote, "*Judgments about values are judgments about the conditions and the results of experienced objects; judgments about that which should regulate the formation of our desires, affections and enjoyments*."[43] This is not the place to present or examine Dewey's theory of value, let alone his moral philosophy. The only question of concern to us is whether his theory of knowledge provides a solution to what he considered to be the main problem of modern philosophy, namely, how to preserve the authority of the values that guide our lives in an age that gives supreme cognitive authority to science.

Dewey's answer, I believe, consists in showing that the practice of modern – that is, experimental – science is shot through with action, with deliberate transformation of (parts of) the situation that has prompted inquiry. Such action is not random; it is intelligent: that is, guided by judgments of practice that make use of the outcomes of earlier experiments. In other words, modern science has closed the gap between theory and practice. Moreover, the outcome of an experiment is a test not only of the hypothesis/theory that predicted (or failed to predict) that outcome, but of the value judgment that the experiment is worth doing, and that it had better be done. Moreover, we noted earlier that throughout an inquiry we evaluate data as reliable or relevant, theories as applicable to the case in hand, etc. In short, modern science, far from doing without value judgments, depends on them all the time.

Still, what has been said so far shows only that value judgments are means to the reconstruction of a problematic situation. As means they are effective or ineffective, adequate or inadequate. But, on reflection, one realizes that all judgments are in the last analysis means to a non-cognitive experience. In other words, judgments of practice including moral judgments are in this respect on a par with scientific judgments. The real problem for Dewey, as opposed to the artificial problem of the status of values in a scientific world, is this:

What revisions and surrenders of current beliefs about authoritative ends and values are demanded by the method and conclusions of natural science? What possibilities of controlled transformation of the content of present belief and practice in human institutions are indicated by the control of natural energies which natural science has effected? These questions are as genuine and imperative as the traditional problem is artificial and futile.[44]

NOTES

1. J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *LW* 4:33.
2. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 38–39.
3. J. Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1916). J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *LW* 12. J. Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder" (1939), *LW* 14:3–90.
4. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 201.
5. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 33.
6. J. Dewey, "Introduction to *Essays in Experimental Logic*" (1916), *MW* 10:331.
7. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 15.
8. Peirce was one of the leading formal logicians of his time as well as, with William James, a co-founder of pragmatism. It has become fashionable in recent decades to associate Dewey with James and to isolate Peirce. Without at all denying the importance of Dewey's relation to James, or James's relation to Peirce, it is, I think, time for another study of Dewey's relation to Peirce. This chapter is, however, not the place for such a study.
9. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 343, n6.
10. B. Russell, "Dewey's New Logic," in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, ed. P. A. Schilpp (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1939), p. 145.
11. J. Dewey, "The Control of Ideas by Facts" (1907) *MW* 4:83–84; emphasis in the original.
12. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 108; emphasis in the original.
13. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 143.
14. H. Putnam, *The Collapse of the Fact–Value Dichotomy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
15. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 143.
16. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 144.
17. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 128.
18. For an alternative interpretation that takes full account of Dewey's early Idealism, see J. R. Shook, *Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000).

19. Dewey, "The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism" (1905), *MW* 3:158–167.
20. J. Dewey, "Brief Studies in Realism" (1911), *MW* 6:108.
21. Dewey, "Brief Studies in Realism," p. 108.
22. Dewey, "Brief Studies in Realism," p. 109.
23. Dewey, "Brief Studies in Realism," p. 110.
24. J. Dewey, "The Existence of the World as a Logical Problem" (1915), *MW* 8:83–97.
25. Dewey, "The Existence of the World as a Logical Problem," p. 94.
26. Dewey, "The Existence of the World as a Logical Problem," pp. 96–97.
27. J. Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," *LW* 14:8–9.
28. Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," pp. 8–9. Dewey quotes himself; see Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 201 and 204.
29. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 70.
30. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 76.
31. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 79–80; emphasis in the original.
32. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 89.
33. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 105.
34. Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," p. 22.
35. Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," p. 9.
36. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 191.
37. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 195.
38. D. Piatt, "Dewey's Logical Theory," in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, ed. P. A. Schilpp (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1939 and 1951), p. 108.
39. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 201.
40. J. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice" (1915), *MW* 8:16.
41. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 22.
42. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 26.
43. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 212; emphasis in the original.
44. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 201–202.

RICHARD M. GALE

3 The naturalism of John Dewey

There are as many different versions of naturalism as there are naturalists. They run the gamut from tender-minded anthropomorphic or humanistic naturalisms that depict nature as made to order for us human beings because it answers back to our deepest feelings and aspirations, to the tough-minded reductive materialistic naturalisms that strip nature of all the qualities that give it human meaning and purpose. The former eschews any bifurcation between man and nature, whereas the latter wallows in it, the only comfort it gives being the realization that we – that is, our scientists – were smart enough to discover that we are aliens in a universe that cares not a whit for our weal and woe. This essay will show that John Dewey's naturalism is distinctly of the anthropomorphic or humanistic sort. First, Dewey's metaphysical theory of naturalism will be expounded, and then it will be shown what ramifications it has for his epistemology, aesthetics, ethics, and religion.

METAPHYSICAL NATURALISM

Dewey's metaphysical naturalism is a theory about the nature of nature, not about the proper method for determining the nature of nature. Metaphysical naturalism cannot consist in nothing but a commitment to determine the nature of nature through the use of the scientific method, broadly conceived, for it is conceivable that a paranormal psychology employing this method would discover that there is telepathy, telekinesis, clairvoyance, and other apparently spiritualistic phenomena, such as disembodied spirits, reincarnation, and the like. A naturalism that is willing to embrace these realities is such in name only. Although Dewey is committed to the scientistic

thesis that all knowledge is gained through the use of scientific method, broadly conceived, he would not consider himself a naturalist were he to accept these spooky phenomena as objective realities. In fact, he would not consider himself a naturalist if he even countenanced an ontological distinction between mental and physical events or, even worse, between mental and physical substances. Dewey developed a version of James's neutral monism that gave a functionally based distinction between the mental and the physical. He called it "biological behaviorism" and invidiously contrasted it with "physiological behaviorism" that understands mental phenomena exclusively in terms of physical processes and states within the organism.[1] In contrast, biological behaviorism analyzes psychological concepts in terms of how a live organism interacts with a natural environment in its endeavor to achieve an ever richer harmony with it. Dewey's functionalistic analyses bear a striking resemblance to those subsequently given by Wittgenstein and Ryle.

If Dewey's naturalism were to consist in nothing more than biological behaviorism, it hardly would justify my calling it anthropomorphic or humanistic. The anthropomorphic features emerge when Dewey gets down to describing the nature of nature in his 1925 masterpiece *Experience and Nature*. The book attempts, in the spirit of Aristotle, to give an empirically based description of the generic traits of existence. They are found to consist in being an event or processual, having unique qualities, and displaying a combination of precarious and stable, settled and unsettled, determinate and indeterminate aspects.

Are these traits found in every experienced existent, no less every existent? Let us first consider Dewey's claim that every such existent is found to be an event or processual. Certainly, this is not something vouchsafed by gross experience, for when I perceive a chair, for example, I do not ordinarily see it as a change or as a process, as I might if the chair was made of ice cream and was rapidly melting in a hot sun. Dewey supports his event ontology by appeal to the fact that physical science conceives of the chair as a succession of events, but this conception is not phenomenologically based. Furthermore, by having theoretical science determine the nature of reality, Dewey goes against his instrumentalistic account of the theoretical entities of science, which denies an objective existence to them and instead sees them as nothing but the inferential vines that connect gross

experiences. They are mere aids in making predictions of the course our gross sense experience will take. This is how he avoided the bifurcation between man and nature that some claimed to be wrought by modern science. Dewey did attempt to deduce that everything is an event or change from the fact that everything changes, which is as sound as deducing that everything is a color from the proposition that everything is colored. Both deductions confound the "is" of predication with that of identity.

What about displaying a combination of precarious and stable features? Are these features common to all of the individuals that we grossly experience? Most of the things that we perceive are not perceived as combining these traits. A chair, for example, is not perceived as being unstable or precarious unless it is missing a leg or has nails protruding from its seat. A more promising way of construing Dewey's claim that every existent is perceived as combining precarious and stable traits is that every existent is perceived as being related to a problematic situation. A problematic situation, which is the initial stage in an inquiry, combines these traits because, on the one hand, it is indeterminate, precarious, or challenging, and, on the other, has determinate or stable features that give us a foothold in helping to resolve the problem. Dewey's claim is tantamount to saying that we experience everything in terms of how it pertains to inquiry. Dewey, in fact, says this in many places. "The conjunction of problematic and determinate characters in nature renders every existence, as well as every idea and human act, an experiment in fact, even though not in design."[2] "Awareness means *attention*, and attention means a crisis of some sort in an existent situation."[3]

The metaphysics of *Experience and Nature*, far from being an empirically based description of the generic traits of existence, can best be understood as a transcendental deduction argument for what nature must be like if it is to be possible for inquiry to take place in it, and this results in an anthropomorphic metaphysics that ensures the world will be a fit place for our Promethean endeavor to control nature through inquiry.

That this was Dewey's purpose helps to explain why he was so insistent, in his 1927 "Half-Hearted Naturalism" that our temporal perspectives of past, present, and future are objective features of nature, not merely subjective states of consciousness that Santayana claimed they were in his objection to Dewey's brand of

naturalism.[4] In order to avoid a bifurcation between man and nature, Dewey holds that "there are in nature both foregrounds and backgrounds, heres and theres, centers and perspectives, foci and margins. If this were not, the story and scene of man would involve a complete break with nature, the insertion of unaccountable and unnatural conditions and factors."[5] The temporal perspective of an inquirer is an irreducibly tensed one that has to do with what is to be done right *now* – at *present* – to resolve some problematic or indeterminate situation that has arisen from *past* conditions and extends into the *future*.

Dewey demanded that a metaphysical theory, like a scientific one, issue in verifiable predictions. Dewey's metaphysics of inquiry is supposed to be verified by the fact that it will help us to become more effective inquirers. By having a firm grasp of the nature of the world in which inquiry is possible, we will somehow become more informed and dedicated inquirers.

> The more sure one is that the world which encompasses human life is of such and such a character ... the more one is committed to try to direct the conduct of life, that of others as well as of himself, upon the basis of the character assigned to the world. And if he finds that he cannot succeed, that the attempt lands him in confusion, inconsistency and darkness, plunging others into discord and shutting them out from participation, rudimentary precepts instruct him to surrender his assurance as a delusion; and to revise his notions of the nature till he makes them more adequate to the concrete facts in which nature is embodied.[6]
>
> To note, register and define the constituent structure of nature is not then an affair neutral to the office of criticism. It is a preliminary outline of the field, whose chief import is to afford understanding of the necessity and nature of the office of intelligence.[7]

As we well know, "intelligence" means inquiry for Dewey.

Let us grant for the sake of argument, though this is very dubious, that if Dewey's metaphysics of inquiry were to be widely accepted, it would result in our becoming more effective inquirers. This outcome counts as verificatory only if we require of a true metaphysical theory that its widespread acceptance lead people to become better inquirers. But why should this outcome be the measure of the truth of a metaphysical theory? For we do not live by inquiry alone: we make love, have religious experiences, hang out, chill, shoot the breeze (provided it is done to amuse rather than defraud), none of

which are part of an inquiry. Some metaphysical systems have as their purpose to help us become more spiritual beings so that we can enter into a communal relation with God or the deeper dimensions of reality. Others have as their purpose to give an account that best integrates everything we know about the world or that gives us the aha-that's-the-way-things-really-are experience. Dewey must supply some reason why we should prefer his verificatory conditions for a metaphysical system rather than these competing ones.

There are passages in which Dewey takes his generic traits to be what is found in every universe of discourse rather than every experience – "the traits and characters that are sure to turn up in every universe of discourse."[8] This interpretation fits the arguments that he gives for his listed traits being generic based on the findings of cultural anthropologists Goldenweiser, Sumner, Tylor, Malinowski, and Boas, with respect to the discourses of different cultures – their cosmogonies, myths, proverbs, philosophies, and literature, both oral and written – rather than on what is phenomenologically vouchsafed by gross experience. That Dewey's generic traits are common to every known universe of discourse in this cultural sense, however, is a far less exciting claim than that these traits are common to every experienced existent, no less every existent *simpliciter*; for the former claim, unlike the latter, allows there to be experiences that lack his generic traits and are not related to any inquiry.

There is, however, a more exciting true claim that can be made about Dewey's generic traits when understood in the inquiry-related rather than universe of discourse-related sense. Although they are not found in every human activity or experience, for we are not always inquiring, it still is the case that all human activities and experiences derive part of their meaning or value from the fact that they are connected up, even if indirectly, with the workaday activity of inquiry. Consider a paradigm case of a non-inquiry-related experience, a religious or mystical experience. It is the stark significant contrast that they have with our precarious life as inquirers that imports meaning and value to such experiences, making them oases at which the self enjoys some rest and rehabilitation amidst the travails of the workaday world. Experiences of a timeless undifferentiated unity are especially cherished because they give one a sense of safety and peace in the midst of a challenging world. Our life as an inquirer is like a dye that spreads over all of our experiences. Our

religious experiences, in turn, can serve as a dye that colors our Promethean endeavors as inquirers.

So far Dewey's *professed* metaphysics of naturalism based on the generic traits of existence has been considered, but his *real* but unannounced metaphysics is based on mystically rooted principles that enable us to achieve unity, both within ourselves and with our fellow persons and nature. As will be seen subsequently, this reveals a deep Hegelian influence that was a constant throughout Dewey's career. To achieve this unity we must overcome every "dualism," by which Dewey meant any case in which numerically distinct entities – entities that exist separately and independently of each other – stand in a non-mediated relation to each other.

The key to understanding the secret mystical philosophy of John Dewey is to take to heart the plight of poor Humpty Dumpty, who, it will be recalled, could not be reassembled by all the king's horses and all the king's men after he fell off the wall and was shattered into many separate, distinct pieces. Reality, for Dewey, is Humpty Dumpty writ large; for if we ever permit it to fall apart into numerically distinct individuals, not all the king's philosophers can put it back together again into relational complexes, be they causal, spatio-temporal, or of any other kind. An explicit formulation of the Humpty Dumpty intuition, even containing an allusion to the poor chap, is given in the 1929 second edition of *Experience and Nature*.

> [Non-empirical] methods begin with results of a reflection that has already torn in two the subject-matter [organism and environment] experienced and the operations and states of experiencing. The problem is then to get together again what has been sundered – which is as if the king's men started with the fragments of the egg and tried to construct that whole egg out of them.[9]

John Dewey developed a philosophy that would assure that Humpty Dumpty would not fall off the wall. This was accomplished by the use of an innocent-looking methodological postulate for which he never gave any argument. It requires that for any apparent dualism in his sense, it be shown how it arises from functional differentiations that emanate out of some background unity. The Humpty Dumpty principle or postulate is a constant in Dewey's philosophy. When Dewey made the transition from absolute idealism to what he called alternatively pragmatism, instrumentalism, or experimentalism he merely changed the name of this background unity from "universal

consciousness" to "experience," this being a case of pouring old wine into new bottles.

In his 1882 "The Pantheism of Spinoza," which was Dewey's second published article, he asks rhetorically, "If they [God, self and the world] are independent realities, how can they relate to each other?"[10] In order to avoid the fate of Humpty Dumpty, "God becomes the Absolute, and Nature and Self are but his manifestations."[11] Dewey's 1884 "Kant and Philosophic Method," which gives the gist of his lost doctoral dissertation, claims that Kant, in virtue of making a numerical distinction between the subject and object of experience, cannot show how it is possible for them to stand in epistemic relations to each other, such as the subject perceiving and knowing the object.[12] "Discrete, separated by a chasm, they are mutually 'transcendent' things, so that how an object can ever get into a subject, or a subject ever get at an object, has become the most unanswerable of philosophic riddles."[13] Dewey adds that "the relation of subject and object is not a 'transcendent' one, but an 'immanent' one, and is but the first form which Reason manifests that it is both synthetic and analytic; that it separates itself from itself, that it may thereby reach higher unity with itself."[14] Two years later, in "The Psychological Standpoint," Dewey holds that there is an all-enveloping background consciousness or reason, which is Hegel's absolute idea, that "differentiates itself so as to give rise to the existence within, that is for, itself of subject and object ... [Thus] the relation of subject and object is one which exists within consciousness."[15] The Humpty Dumpty principle runs throughout the 1888 book on *Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding*.[16] Dewey challenges the Cartesian dualism between mind and matter: "[t]he conceptions are disparate and opposed. No interaction is possible."[17] This is followed by Dewey's variation on Bradley's vicious infinite regress argument against relations. Introducing God as a *Deus ex machina* who connects mind and matter, "introduced a third factor where two were already too many. What is the relation of God to Mind and to Matter? Is it simply a third somewhat, equally distinct from both, or does it contain both within itself?"[18] Dewey raises the same objection against Locke's separation of the subject and object of experience that he leveled against Kant. Because it is "tied to the view that reality is distinct from intelligence, it is obliged to draw the conclusion that these

relations are not to be found in actual existence, and hence that all knowledge ... is unreal."[19]

This Hegelian idea of the many "emanating" out of the one was retained long after he gave up absolute idealism. In a 1915 letter to Scudder Klyce he writes that "the 'one' is always pluralizing and (re)covering its diversities before they escape (or become plural) and thereby keeping itself going."[20] In 1929 Dewey wrote that "To non-empirical method ... object and subject, mind and matter ... are separate and independent. Therefore it has upon its hands the problem of how it is possible to know at all; how an outer world can affect an inner mind; how the acts of mind can reach out and lay hold of objects defined in antithesis to them. Naturally it is at a loss for an answer."[21] "[W]e have no ready-made distinction between the individual agent and the world of experience over against him ... each is built up out of a common material by contemporaneous processes."[22] One can recognize in these later, mature comments of Dewey the same Humpty Dumpty principle that informs his very early views.

There is, however, at least one important apparent difference between the pre- and post-instrumentalist account of the background unity out of which apparent dualisms emanate. Whereas for the former it is Hegel's absolute mind or consciousness, for the latter it is experience. Some will see this as a desirable demystifying development, a movement away from an obscure mystical notion of an absolute mind to something that we are experientially aware of. But appearances deceive, for this concept of experience is of a piece with that of his apparently abandoned concept of a Hegelian absolute. The reason why no one ever understood what Dewey meant by "experience" is not because he was a poor writer, as is commonly claimed, but rather because he was formulating a mystical doctrine. Actually, he was a very good writer, his prose style being perfectly suited to the mystical doctrine he was formulating, a mushy description being perfectly suited to what is itself mushy; however, his commentators, along with John Dewey himself, were unable to believe that he meant what he actually wrote. The motto of the reader of Dewey should be "It is the philosophy, stupid!" For the most difficult thing when doing the history of philosophy is to read just what the author actually wrote.

Dewey, however, championed another concept of experience that was inconsistent with his mystical one. In an attempt to placate

common sense, he sometimes uses it in a non-inclusive way, the following being an example: "No one with an honest respect for scientific conclusions can deny that experience as an existence is something that occurs only under highly specialized conditions, such as are found in a highly organized creature which in turn requires a specialized environment."[23] But, in opposition to this limited type of experience, there are passages in *Experience and Nature* and other publications that clearly make experience all-inclusive, such as:

> "Experience" denotes the planted field, the sowed seeds, the reaped harvests, the changes of night and day, spring and autumn, wet and dry, heat and cold, that are observed, feared, longed for; it also denotes the one who plants and reaps ... It is "double-barreled" in that it recognizes in its primary integrity no division between act and material, subject and object, but contains them both in an unanalyzable totality. "Thing" and "thought" ... are single-barreled; they refer to products discriminated by reflection out of primary experience.[24]

The Humpty Dumpty principle tells us that individuals that stand to each other in immediate relations are not numerically distinct from each other, but neither are they numerically identical with each other, since the relation is not a transitive one. (X can be "identical" with Y, and Y "identical" with Z without X being "identical" with Z.) You might say that they are identical but not *that* identical. This is Dewey's version of James's pluralistic mysticism and is within the theistic dualistic mystical tradition of the West according to which a person having a mystical experience becomes identical with God, but not *that* identical, as Meister Eckhardt would have it. Dewey's quest for unity, however, does not stop with the Humpty Dumpty principle. It involves the additional principles of organism and continuity.

Organism

This is a root metaphor that was another constant in Dewey's philosophy. In his Hegelian phase, Dewey, inspired by his undergraduate study of T. H. Huxley's *Elements of Physiology*, thought of the universe as an organic whole, with God being the principle of the union of the ideal and the real. No doubt Dewey's sense of the organic unity of the world also had roots in his beloved Romantic poets, such as

Wordsworth, who envisioned the world as an organic unity that manifested the infinite life of one great spirit. The parts of the universe are analogous to the organic parts of an organism, since in each case these parts cannot exist separately from the whole that includes them. Just as a hand in isolation from an organism is not a hand, a part of the universe cannot be what it is if separated from the enveloping universe. And because each part of these two wholes cannot exist without its inclusion in that whole, each part cannot exist in separation from every other part.

This, in effect, holds that the parts of an organic whole bear internal relations to each other. The early, Hegelian Dewey clearly was committed to this view. "Whether we consider the relations of subject and object, or the nature of categories, we find ourselves forced into the presence of the notion of organic relation. The relation between subject and object is not an external one; it is one in a higher unity which is itself constituted by this relation."[25] Our very quest for knowledge "presupposes that there is no such thing as an isolated fact in the universe, but that all are connected with each other as members of a common whole."[26] This conceptual tying together of individuals survives into the post-Hegelian Dewey. "I hold that nature has both an irreducible brute unique 'itselfness' in everything which exists and also a connection of each thing (which is what *it* is) with other things *such that without them it 'can neither be nor be conceived*'."[27] The italicized portion of this quotation denies that possession of unique non-relational properties bestows independent existence.

The following claim by Dewey makes the relation between organic activities, such as breathing, and its environment mutually internal.

> Let us inquire how the matter stands when these mental and psychical objects are looked at in their connection with experience in its primary and vital modes. As has been suggested, these objects are not original, isolated and self-sufficient. They represent the discriminated analysis of the process of experiencing from subject-matter experienced. Although breathing is in fact a function that includes both air and the operations of the lungs, we may detach the latter for study, even though we cannot separate it in fact.[28]

The dependency relation between lungs and air is rendered a mutual one by Dewey's claim that "these objects are not original, isolated and self-sufficient." Thus, it is not only the lungs that require air but

the air that requires lungs. Successive events also stand in internal relations to each other. "Every event as such is passing into other things, in such a way that a later occurrence is an integral part of the *character* or *nature* of present existence."[29]

Dewey's claim of a mutual dependency between lungs and air, and, more generally, between an organism and its natural environment, is dubious, for the air can exist without there being lungs to breathe it and a natural environment can survive the demise of all organisms. This is because being an environment is not an essential property of nature, just as being two-legged is not an essential property of a cyclist, given that a cyclist can survive the loss of her legs. The *de dicto* modal claim that it is necessary that a cyclist is two-legged is true but the corresponding *de re* modal claim that a cyclist is necessarily or essentially two-legged is false for the reason just given. Likewise, food, say wild blueberries, could continue to exist, even if they ceased to be food because all the eaters of food became extinct, because they are not essentially food.

Continuity

The use of the word "continuity" is rife in Dewey's writings. Sometimes it is just an alternative name for the Humpty Dumpty principle but most often it refers to what is required for there to be a developmental or evolutionary process. It is only in Dewey's magnum opus, the 1938 *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, that it gets explained. "The idea of continuity is not self-explanatory. But its meaning excludes complete rupture on one side and mere repetition of identities on the other; it precludes reduction of the 'higher' to the 'lower' just as it precludes complete breaks and gaps."[30] Dewey immediately contradicts his claim that there are no breaks or gaps in a processual development when he adds that "We cannot ... say in advance that development proceeds by minute increments or by abrupt mutations."[31] Which way shall we have it? Given that Dewey is a professed empiricist and that we should not be able to determine a priori whether evolutionary development occurs in a continuous or discrete manner, it should be the latter, non-committal position that is attributed to him.

He adds this additional important feature of continuity. "What *is* excluded by the postulate of continuity is the appearance upon the

scene of a totally new outside force as a cause of changes that occur."[32] It is unclear what Dewey means by "a totally new outside force." Does this mean, for example, that a biologist cannot use explanatory concepts other than those employed by the physicist? We know from Dewey's 1938 contribution to the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, the "Unity of Science as a Social Problem," that he rejects scientific reductionism. "The attempt to secure unity by defining the terms of all the sciences in terms of some one science is doomed in advance to defeat."[33] Certainly, Dewey meant to exclude appeal to a supernatural "outside force" in an explanation but, as will be seen, he also excluded appeal to traditional Cartesian "mentalistic" factors.

Dewey's claim that the different stages in a developmental process are similar to each other but not *that* similar is quite vague. Plainly, more needs to be said about the relation between the lower and higher or less and more complexly integrated phases in a developmental process. We know that Dewey officially rejects both a bottom-up and a top-down use of continuity, the former reducing the higher to the lower, as in reductive materialism, and the latter the lower to the higher, as in panpsychism. But, as will be seen when consideration is given to how Dewey applied his principle of continuity to specific topics, he came close to a top-down use of it.

The roots of the top-down interpretation can be seen in Dewey's first published essay, "Metaphysical Assumptions of Materialism," in which it is claimed that unless mind is implicitly present in matter it is impossible to explain how mind could emerge from matter. Here Dewey is making use of the scholastic principle that there must be as much reality in the cause as in the effect. This requires that the effect must be contained in the cause, if not actually then implicitly. Dewey often speaks of the lower phase of a developmental process as "foreshadowing" the higher one without explaining what this foreshadowing is. One reasonable interpretation is in terms of this scholastic principle of causation, another in terms of the lower being an epitomization or prefiguring of the higher: there are many passages in which Dewey makes use of the doctrine of epitomizations, though without calling it such.

The top-down version undergirds Dewey's view that the universe is an organic whole and must be explained at every level of its

development in terms of organic concepts. It was this that attracted him to Leibniz, about whose thought he said:

> What is this but to say that the universe is an organic whole? Its activity is the manifestation of Life, – nay, it is Life. The laws of its activity reveal that continuity of development, that harmony of inter-relation, which are everywhere the marks of Life. The final and fundamental notion, therefore, by which Leibniz interprets the laws of physics and mathematics is that of Life.[34]

The same sort of panpsychism is found in the mature writing of Dewey.

> Plants and non-human animals act *as if* they were concerned that their activity, their characteristic receptivity and response, should maintain itself. Even atoms and molecules show a selective bias in the indifferences, affinities and repulsions when exposed to other events. With respect to some things they are hungry to the point of greediness; in the presence of others they are sluggish and cold.[35]

In the 1929 *The Quest of Certainty* it is written that "Indirectly, purpose is a legitimate and necessary idea in describing Nature itself in the large. For man is continuous with nature."[36] And "Preferential activities characterize every individual."[37] And in the 1940 "Time and Individuality" Dewey holds that:

> as human individuality can be understood only in terms of time as fundamental reality, so for physical individuals time is not simply a measure of predetermined changes in mutual positions, but is something that enters into their beings ... the principle of developing career applies to all things in nature, as well as to human beings.[38]

It would appear that even the most elemental particles of physics perform inquiries of a sort – proto-inquiries as Thomas Alexander and Tom Burke, two leading Dewey interpreters, would say.

But more is required of the lower phases of a developmental process than that they "foreshadow" or be epitomizations of the higher ones. They must continue on into, be integrated by, the higher ones. Aristotle's thesis that the appetitive soul is retained by the higher forms of soul, the sentient and the rational, is an example of this. All human activities, no matter how sophisticated and ethereal, are rooted in biology. This completes the exposition of Dewey's metaphysics of naturalism and it now will be shown how its principles and

theses are employed in his epistemology, aesthetics, ethics, and religion.

APPLICATIONS OF DEWEY'S NATURALISM

Epistemology

The major concern in epistemology is to specify what knowledge is. Dewey's approach is to begin with successful cases of knowing and then analyze what goes on in them. They are found to be cases in which inquiry successfully resolves some problem. An inquiry consists of five stages: an initial indeterminate situation; the instituting of a problem through the gathering of relevant facts and considerations; the determination of a plan of action to solve the problem; a process of reasoning that predicts the results of so acting; and the testing of the plan of action to see if it solves the problem.

In his *Logic*, Dewey analyzes all logical distinctions and concepts in terms of their function in furthering inquiry. If Dewey is right that we are always inquiring, this narrow focus is justified, otherwise not. So certain was Dewey of the ubiquity of inquiry that he developed a naturalistic metaphysics that projected onto reality at large the categories that pertain to inquiry, as was seen with his generic traits of existence. He naturalizes epistemology by subjecting it to the principle of continuity of his naturalistic metaphysics. Darwinian psychology shows that originally the brain was an instrument of adaptive behavior, and by the principle of continuity, it should be assumed that this persists in our more advanced cognitive activities as knowers. It is asserted in the 1908 "Does Reality Possess Practical Character?" that "even if we try to believe that the cognitive function has supervened as a different operation, it is difficult to believe that the transfiguration has been so radical that knowing has lost all traces of its connection with vital impulse ... a certain promoting, a certain carrying forward of the vital impulse, importing certain differences in things, *is* the aim of knowledge."[39] Continuity is required so as to avoid a non-natural view of mentality: "The isolation of intellectual disposition from concrete empirical facts of biological impulse and habit-formation entails a denial of the continuity of mind with nature."[40] *The Quest for Certainty* reiterates the continuity between the organs of knowledge and nature, claiming that in principle we can

"give a genetic account of the development of mental and intellectual processes" out of the organic.[41]

The continuity of our higher cognitive faculties with biological processes is most fully developed in the *Logic*. "*Logic is a naturalistic theory*" meaning "on one side, that there is no breach of continuity between operation of inquiry and biological operations and physical operations. 'Continuity,' on the other side, means that rational operations *grow out of* organic activities, without being identical with that from which they emerge."[42] Dewey prides himself on the fact that he accounts for the logic of inquiry in observable terms. "Conceptions derived from a mystical faculty of *intuition* or anything that is so occult as not to be open to public inspection and verification (such as the purely psychical, for example) are excluded."[43] "Knowledge is to be defined in terms of inquiry, not *vice-versa*."[44] The biological functions are said to "foreshadow" deliberate inquiry. "[B]iological functions and structures prepare the way for deliberate inquiry and ... *foreshadow* its pattern."[45] "The structure and course of life-behavior has a definite pattern, spatial and temporal. This pattern definitely *foreshadows* the general pattern of inquiry."[46] When an inquiry is successful, the final "belief or assertion is the counterpart, upon this level, of reintegration upon the organic level."[47] These quotations speak to the ubiquity of biology.

Dewey makes use of his principle of continuity in his treatment of specific logical concepts and operations: for example, his claim that the operations of affirmation and negation "have of course an existential basis and matrix. Integration and differentiation [which is what affirmation and negation do] are biological processes *foreshadowing* the logical operations just mentioned. They are themselves prepared for and *foreshadowed* in physical processes of conjunction and separation."[48] This example, of which there are many, clearly brings out the limitations in Dewey's attempt to understand all logical concepts and operations *solely* in terms of their role in inquiry. The problem with his account is that we can include a negative proposition (that the cat is not on the mat) as a relevant fact of the case and exclude a positive one (that the cat is on the mat) as not relevant. The distinction between negative and positive propositions, therefore, is not based on the distinction between the operations of excluding and including propositions in the course of an inquiry but on the nature of the propositions themselves. A simple affirmative or

positive proposition predicates a positive property of its subject – that is, a property that is incompatible with some property that is of the same quality as itself in the way in which being red is incompatible with being green – whereas a negative proposition predicates a negative property of its subject – that is, a property that is not incompatible with any property that is of the same quality as itself in the way in which being non-red is compatible with being non-green. This account applies only to "atomic" propositions, but it can be extended to apply to more complex propositions.[49]

Aesthetics

Dewey has a similar story to tell about the biological rootedness of artistic creation and aesthetic appreciation. An indication of how seriously he took the power of ideas to be is his pie-in-the-sky claim that our culture could become integrated if we realized that all modes of thinking, scientific as well as artistic, are organically rooted. Dewey's *Art as Experience*, which is his most important work, attempts to recover "the continuity of esthetic experience with normal processes of living."[50] Its starting point is the rhythm of organic life in which "there are rhythmic beats of want and fulfillment, pulses of doing and being withheld from doing."[51] An organism's restoration of union with its environment "bears within itself the germs of consummation akin to the esthetic.[52] Thus, to grasp the sources of esthetic experience it is ... necessary to have recourse to animal life below the human scale."[53] Dewey gives the example of a fox stalking its prey in which the present "absorbs" the past and "presses forward."

Dewey's naturalizing of aesthetics challenges the Platonic account. As has been seen, Dewey contended that the act of artistic creation is biologically rooted. But, Dewey claims, the same must hold for the act of esthetic perception or appreciation, the reason being that it is a reenactment of the artistic act of creation. Dewey formulates the reenactment thesis in a fudgy manner. Esthetic perception "involves activities that are *comparable* to those of the creator" in that it too "is a process consisting in a series of responsive acts that accumulate toward objective fulfillment."[54] Esthetic perception "must include relations *comparable* to those which the original producer underwent."[55] Dewey immediately adds that "they are *not the same* in any literal sense. But with the perceiver, as with the

artist, there must be an ordering of the elements of the whole that is in form, *although not in details*, the same as the process of organization the creator of the work consciously experienced."[56] Some more specification is given by the claim that "Without an act of recreation the object is not perceived as a work of art. The artist selected, simplified, clarified, abridged and condensed according to his interest. The beholder must go through these operations according to his point of view and interest."[57] In support of the reenactment thesis Dewey gives the examples of the skilled surgeon who follows another surgeon's performance "sympathetically, though not overtly, in his own body," and the expert pianist who "fingers music while reading a score or hearing a performance."[58] An unfortunate consequence of the reenactment thesis is that a couple in love are barred from holding hands at a piano recital.

This account of aesthetic experience undercuts Plato's. Plato held that concrete, worldly instances of beauty necessarily are imperfect instances of the form of the beautiful in itself – the what-it-is-to-be-beautiful. Our aesthetic experiences of them are passive and serve to trigger recollections of our immaterial soul's "vision" of the form of beauty in its full frontal nudity prior to our soul's entombment in the body. This "vision" is a purely intellectual one – a seeing with one's mind's eye – that is devoid of any physical apparatus or sensuous content. But if Dewey is right that there is no aesthetic perception devoid of biological processes, Plato's intellectual "seeing" of beauty is not an aesthetic perception at all. Dewey would find this faculty of intellectual aesthetic intuition suspect, as he does a faculty of moral intuition; for in both cases there are no agreed-upon objective tests for their proper functioning or for distinguishing between veridical and unveridical perceptions. Dewey's anti-Platonism is beautifully captured by his claim that "Nothing that a man has ever reached by the highest flight of thought or penetrated by any probing insight is inherently such that it may not become the heart and core of sense."[59]

Ethics

The same anti-Platonic theme is found in Dewey's account of ethics that blocks the need to appeal to any transcendent or other-worldly standard of the good, Plato's form of the good for example, by offering

a naturalistic analysis of ethics. The most vicious dualism of them all for Dewey is that between the normative and the factual, between is and ought. The reason is that it supports a dualism between ethics and science that has the consequence that ethical decisions are not based on our most reliable knowledge about the world but on what some authority or outmoded institution ordains. According to Dewey, history teaches us that invariably this dualism has been used to shore up an undemocratic society in which there is a privileged class of "priests" or "philosopher kings" having a special access to the transcendent realm of moral truth who have authoritarian control over others.

Dewey is not the relativist that he often is portrayed as since he does have a summum bonum, *growth*, that is defined in a Hegelian manner as the realization of ever greater degrees of self-integration in which diverse and often conflicting interests and desires are unified. Growth is at the apex of a pyramid in which each lower stratum causally supports the stratum immediately above. The stratum immediately below growth is inquiry, since it is the best method that we know of for gaining the knowledge and power to promote growth. Immediately below inquiry is a moral democracy in which everyone is given the wherewithal to freely grow. This requires widespread communication and cooperation, since many of the problems of men require collective inquiry for their amelioration. The pyramid's bottom stratum is education, since people must be trained to become effective collective inquirers.

Dewey's growth criterion for the good is the same as that for an aesthetic experience, thereby reducing the good to the beautiful. The criterion for the success of an inquiry also is based on the achievement of aesthetic type unification; for the determinate situation with which a successful inquiry terminates has just the sort of aesthetic unity that the initiating indeterminate situation lacked. Thus the true also is reduced to the beautiful. I called *Art as Experience* Dewey's most important book because it gives us the key for this grand identification of the true and the good with the beautiful.

Does Dewey's account of the good in terms of growth succeed in reducing an ethical proposition (this course of action is good or the one you ought to pursue) to a purely factual one (this course of action best promotes growth among the available alternatives). The problem is whether the latter proposition about what best promotes growth is

a purely descriptive or factual one. Since growth is an aesthetic concept, the issue gets down to whether aesthetic propositions are objective. This is a most complex and controversial issue that cannot be pursued here.

There is another way in which Dewey might be interpreted as reducing the normative to the factual. He accepts the Socratic thesis that virtue is knowledge: that no one ever knowingly chooses what is morally wrong. For Dewey what converts the desir*ed* or the valu*ed* into the desir*able* or valu*able* is a *proper* inquiry into all the causes and consequences of the particular occurrence of valuing or desiring. This is a version of the ideal observer theory because it holds the good action to be the one that is chosen by someone who has performed a proper inquiry into all the causes and consequences of this action. Again, it is not clear whether Dewey has succeeded in closing the gap between the normative and the factual, since it could be argued that equally knowledgeable persons could disagree about the relative desirability – that is, aesthetic merits – of the different outcomes of alternative courses of action that are open to someone, just as they could disagree about the relative merits of operas by Wagner and Verdi. Not only could persons disagree about aesthetic issues, they also could disagree about whether Deweyan growth should be the *summum bonum*: this Hegelian stuff is not everyone's cup of tea. This issue cannot be further pursued here.

I think it is wrong-headed to view Dewey's naturalization of ethics as an attempt to escape from G. E. Moore's "open-question" objection to any analysis or definition of an ethical concept in terms of purely empirical or descriptive ones. Dewey's naturalization of ethics has a different goal, namely to show that our ethical concerns grow out of human nature, in particular our impulses, propensities, desires, and habits, and is to be decided by the use of inquiry, buttressed by our most reliable scientific knowledge. He is not concerned with meeting the challenge of ethical skepticism any more than he was concerned with meeting the challenge of epistemological skepticism. Ethics is a part of our nature and needs no justification. Dewey wrote that "[t]he authority [for morals] is that of life."[60] The resemblance to Wittgenstein's language-game fideism – the language-game is played, this is who we are, this is what we do – is very striking.

Religion

Dewey's naturalization of religion is worked out in his 1934 *A Common Faith*. Its purpose is to liberate religious feelings and experiences from any supernatural entanglements. His initial definition of God is based on his *summum bonum* of complete self-integration. God is "the unity of all ideal ends arousing us to desire and actions ... the ideal ends that at a given time and place one acknowledges as having authority over his volition and emotion, the values to which one is supremely devoted, as far as these ends, through imagination, take on unity."[61] This naturalizes God with a vengeance, for it not only divests him of his traditional supernatural status but of his very entity-hood as well. He is demoted to having mere intentional existence as the object of imaginative projections by different persons, not an objective being in and for himself. And, if this is not bad enough, Dewey's definition results in a dizzying polytheism since different people, as well as one person at different times, imaginatively project different ideal unifying ends.

But Dewey has another definition of "God" as an "*active* relation between ideal and actual" that seems to impute some entiative status to God.[62] This definition bears some resemblance to James's definition of *God* as those aspects or forces of reality that aid us in our struggle to make good win out over evil in the long run. James accorded a supernatural status to these friendly forces, making them a surrounding sea of mother-consciousness that we could access through mystical experiences that have salvific force.

Dewey denies that mystical experiences are cognitive – apprehensions of an objective reality – because mystics disagree among themselves about the nature of the object of their experiences and there are no objective tests for distinguishing between veridical and unveridical mystical experiences.[63] Because there are no such tests, reality claims based mystical experiences are not in principle verifiable, and, because not verifiable, they fail to have any literal or cognitive meaning. In other words, they fail to express a proposition – something true or false. But, like traditional metaphysics, which also is devoid of meaning, they have *significance* in that they *express* human ideals and aspirations.

> For things which are *false* or even meaningless if they are taken to be what they purport to be, statements about the ultimate structure of the universe

and absolute truth, acquire another import when they are interpreted in the context of their bearing upon human and social predicaments and activities.[64]

The "false" alternative is ruled out by Dewey's claim that they are unverifiable; for a false proposition is one that is verifiable but flunked the relevant tests. Thus, Dewey is committed to holding mystical claims to be meaningless. Although Dewey argued strenuously against the emotive theory of ethics of the logical positivists, he was in full agreement with their emotive theory of metaphysics.

Dewey thinks that mystical experiences have great emotional value because they give us a feeling of union with nature. What Dewey says about the mystical aspect of aesthetic experience applies also to mystical experiences, especially the sort of nature mysticism or cosmic consciousness that his beloved poets, Emerson, Whitman, and Wordsworth, expressed.

> A work of art elicits and accentuates this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live ... It also explains the religious feeling that accompanies intense esthetic perception ... We are carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves ... This whole is then felt as an expansion of ourselves ... we are citizens of this vast world beyond ourselves, and any intense realization of its presence with and in us brings a peculiarly satisfying sense of unity in itself and with ourselves.[65]

Dewey's dualism between meaning and significance is highly suspect. The problem is how mystical claims can be meaningless and yet be apparent objects of belief and, moreover, have great benefits for believers in them. It was seen that Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics was built on several mystical doctrines – the Humpty Dumpty principle, continuity, and the organism theses. What is meaningless cannot play these roles. Thus, Dewey's denial that mystical claims have meaning renders his philosophy inconsistent.[66]

This completes my examination of Dewey's naturalism. It was seen to be a big, bold, even breath-taking, metaphysical doctrine that unified his entire philosophy. And it was metaphysical in the traditional sense, because its underlying doctrines of Humpty Dumptyism, continuity, and organism do not admit of any objective verification. When Dewey was officially doing metaphilosophy, he

recommended the deconstruction or exorcism of this kind of metaphysics, which he claimed to be one of the "bads" of traditional philosophy. The future of philosophy is all the richer because, thank God, Dewey was too much of a philosopher to adhere to his own deconstructionist metaphilosophy.

NOTES

1. This version of naturalism clashes with the position that is taken in J. Dewey, S. Hook, and E. Nagel, "Are Naturalists Materialists?" (1945), *LW* 15, wherein an ontological dualism between mental and physical events is countenanced with the proviso that mental events are epiphenomenal upon physical events, thereby being denied any causal efficacy. Except for the opening paragraph, Dewey had little to do with the writing of it, Nagel being the principal author. But there still remains the question of why Dewey agreed to be listed as a co-author. Maybe it was because he wanted to lend support to his two leading disciples in meeting objections from a common foe, Sheldon. There is much about this essay that is amiss. For example, it rejects the contingent identity version of materialism – that every mental event is numerically identical with some physical event – because a *proposition* reporting a mental event is not identical with a *proposition* reporting a physical event, as is evident by the fact that you can believe (know, etc.) that you are in pain without believing that your C-fibers are firing. But in spite of this difference in the senses of these propositions they could be co-reporting in virtue of the *event* of your being in pain being identical with the *event* of your C-fibers firing. In this connection, think of the propositions that there is water in this pot and that there is a collection of H_2O molecules in this pot. Furthermore, the essay errs in its claim that this identity eliminates mental events; for, if X is identical with Y, then if X exists, so does Y, given the identicals have all their properties in common. Dewey himself was an identity theorist with respect to a limited class of mental events, namely sensations, treating sensations or impressions as physiological processes. This renders it all the more anomalous that Dewey allowed his name to be affixed to this essay.
2. J. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1925), *LW* 1:63.
3. J. Dewey, "Does Reality Possess a Practical Character," *MW* 4:138; emphasis in the original.
4. J. Dewey, "Half-hearted Naturalism" (1927), *LW* 3:73–82.
5. Dewey, "Half-hearted Naturalism" (1927), pp. 74–75.
6. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 309.
7. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 315.
8. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 308.

9. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 19.
10. J. Dewey, "The Pantheism of Spinoza" (1882), *EW* 1:9.
11. Dewey, "The Pantheism of Spinoza," p. 9.
12. J. Dewey, "Kant and Philosophic Method" (1884), *EW* 1:34–48.
13. W. James, *Some Problems of Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 1979), p. 49.
14. Dewey, "Kant and Philosophic Method," p. 41.
15. J. Dewey, "The Psychological Standpoint" (1886), *EW* 1:131.
16. J. Dewey, *Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding* (1888), *EW* 1. See especially pp. 286–289, 297, 316–317, 320–321, 360, 377, and 422.
17. Dewey, *Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding*, p. 286.
18. Dewey, *Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding*, p. 287.
19. Dewey, *Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding*, p. 395.
20. John Dewey to Scudder Klyce 1915.04.22 (03516), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, vol. 2, ed. Larry Hickman (Charlottesville: InteLex, 2005).
21. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 20.
22. J. Dewey, "Illusory Psychology" (1887), *EW* 1:172.
23. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, pp. 11–12.
24. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, pp. 18–19. There is a way in which the opposition between Dewey's limited and inclusivist claims about experience can be reconciled. Take them as analyzing different concepts. The limited account is concerned with the ordinary concept of experience, in which there already is a distinction between organism and environment and thus between a *how* and a *what* of experience; the inclusivist with a metaphysical all-pervasive background unity, called "immediate" or "primary experience" by Dewey, out of which emanates in some mysterious manner the *hows* and *whats* of ordinary experience. The former is "experience" with a lower case "e" and the latter "Experience" with an upper case "E." This is similar to Thales' two types of water – ordinary water, the stuff that is pumped from wells and drunk, and metaphysical water, the underlying *phusis* of all changes.
25. J. Dewey, "Kant and Philosophic Method" (1884), *EW* 1:42.
26. J. Dewey, *Psychology* (1887), *EW* 2:201.
27. Dewey, "Half-hearted Naturalism," p. 80; my emphasis added in the main, but '*it*' is in the original.
28. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 21.
29. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 92; emphasis in the original.

30. J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *LW* 12:30.
31. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 31.
32. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 31; emphasis in the original.
33. J. Dewey, "Unity of Science as a Social Problem" (1938), *LW* 13:276.
34. Dewey, *Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding*, pp. 282–283.
35. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 162.
36. J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *LW* 4:196.
37. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 200.
38. Dewey, *Logic*, pp. 107–108.
39. J. Dewey, "Does Reality Possess a Practical Character?" (1908), *MW* 4:132–133; emphasis in the original.
40. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1922), *MW* 14:130.
41. Dewey, *Quest for Certainty*, p. 184.
42. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 26; emphasis in the original.
43. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 26; emphasis in the original.
44. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 28.
45. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 30; my emphasis added.
46. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 40; my emphasis added.
47. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 40.
48. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 199; my emphasis added.
49. For all the gory details see: R. Gale, "Problems of Negation and Non-being," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, monograph 10 (1976).
50. J. Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934), *LW* 10:16.
51. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 22.
52. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 20.
53. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 24.
54. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 58; my emphasis added.
55. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 60; my emphasis added.
56. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 60; my emphasis added.
57. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 60.
58. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 103–104.
59. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 36.
60. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 57.
61. J. Dewey, *A Common Faith* (1934), *LW* 9:29.
62. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 34; emphasis in the original.
63. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 9, 10, 24–28.
64. J. Dewey, "William James as Empiricist" (1942), *LW* 15:16; my emphasis added.

65. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 199.
66. Steven Rockefeller, who is the deepest and most sensitive of all Dewey interpreters, has an excellent discussion of problems with Dewey's account of mysticism in S. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1991).

4 Dewey's logic of inquiry

Dewey and Peirce shared a common focus on the elaboration of a model of inquiry that seeks to remove doubt concerning the answer to some question by identifying potential answers to the question, ascertaining the evidence available for evaluating the candidacy of such answers as solutions to the problem posed, conducting experiments to acquire more evidence and deciding on the basis of the available evidence which of the potential answers to add to the stock of knowledge.

My own proposals concerning how to model well-conducted inquiry depart in several respects from the proposals of both Peirce and Dewey. But these two great philosophers gave classical expression to the ideas that inspired the projects I have undertaken. In this essay, I shall comment on some aspects of Dewey's vision of the logic of inquiry, pointing to important respects in which I depart from his approach. Because I shall be arguing with Dewey, I wish to emphasize here and now that I am arguing not to dismiss him or his ideas but to sharpen some of my ideas by confrontation with one of the points of view that inspired them.

Dewey began his *Logic* by propounding "an apparent paradox." According to Dewey there is general agreement concerning the "proximate subject matter" of logic but very little consensus concerning the "ultimate subject matter."[1]

Dewey acknowledged that consensus concerning proximate subject-matter is not complete. He emphasized that the lack of consensus concerning proximate subject-matter may be a reflection of controversies concerning the aim and purpose of the study of logic. For example, J. M. Keynes and F. P. Ramsey pondered the prospects for a probability logic early in the 1920s. C. I. Lewis and

others were exploring modal logics. There were and are an abundance of so called "deviant logics": logics of imperatives, obligation and value. All of these claimed a place at the table of proximate subject-matter where Dewey alleged that harmony prevailed. I suppose that they all may be said to study the relations of propositions to one another. But even this is open to debate. Does probability logic study the relations of propositions to one another? Whatever the answer may be, defending the answer will have to consider the ultimate subject-matter of logic – i.e. the aim and purpose of the study of logic.

Dewey's famous and often cited statement of his "hypothesis" concerning the ultimate subject-matter of logic states that "all logical forms (with their characteristic properties) arise within the operation of inquiry and are concerned with control of inquiry so that it may yield warranted assertions."[2]

I have nothing to say about the origins of logical forms and cannot comment on Dewey's hypothesis concerning natural history. But there is a normative dimension to Dewey's thesis. Logical forms "are concerned with the control of inquiry so that it may yield warranted assertions." This part of Dewey's claim concerns the function inquirers assign to logical forms in the conduct of inquiry. Such forms prescribe conditions that ought to be met if inquiry is to be conducted properly.

Of course, others have emphasized the prescriptive dimension of logic. But authors like Frege thought that logical principles are laws of truth. The prescriptive force of logical principles, according to Frege, derives from a general injunction that our beliefs ought to conform to the truth including the true laws of geometry and physics as well as the true laws of logic – which are, according to Frege, the laws of truth.[3] One of the many debts I owe to Dewey's thought is his resistance to the hostility to context that infests the thinking about logic of so many of the distinguished writers who have followed in the paths of Frege and Russell.

According to Dewey, the allegation that the study of well-conducted inquiries is the province of methodology and that methodology is a distinct study from logic begs the question against his contention that there is no fixed difference between logic and methodology. He, nonetheless, conceded that there is some plausibility to the view that there is such a difference.

Since inquiries and methods are better and worse, logic involves a standard for criticizing and evaluating them. How, it will be asked, can inquiry which has to be evaluated by reference to a standard be itself the source of the standard? How can inquiry originate logical forms (as it has been stated that it does) and yet be subject to the requirements of these forms? The question is one that must be met. It can be adequately answered only in the course of the entire discussion that follows. But the meaning of the position may be clarified by indicating the direction in which the answer will be sought.[4]

In any given inquiry, there are methodological and logical principles that serve as standards for evaluating the conduct of current inquiry. Logical and methodological principles do not differ in this respect. And both types of principles are subject to modification in the ongoing practice of inquiry.

If there are such habits as are necessary to conduct every successful inferential inquiry, then the formulations that express them will be logical principles of all inquiries. In this statement "successful" means operative in a manner that tends in the long run, or in the continuity of inquiry, to yield results that are either confirmed in further inquiry or that are corrected by use of the same procedures. These guiding logical principles are not *premises* of inference or argument. They are conditions to be satisfied such that knowledge of them provides a principle of direction and of testing. They are formulations of ways of treating subject-matter that have been found to be so determinative of sound conclusions in the past that they are taken to regulate further inquiry until definite grounds are found for questioning them. While they are derived from examination of methods previously used in their connection with the kind of conclusion they have produced, they are *operationally a priori* with respect to further inquiry.[5]

Dewey points to two features differentiating logical from other methodological principles: (1) logical principles are "habits" or rules of inference necessary to the conduct of *every* successful inferential inquiry. The other beliefs and values of the inquiring agent are relevant in some but not all inquiries; (2) logical principles are postulational.

To engage in inquiry is like entering into a contract. It commits the inquirer to observance of certain conditions. A stipulation is a statement of conditions that are agreed to in the conduct of some affair. The stipulations involved are at first implicit in the undertaking of inquiry. As they are formally acknowledged (formulated), they become logical forms of various degrees of

generality ... Every demand is a request, but not every request is a postulate. For a postulate involves the assumption of responsibilities. The responsibilities that are assumed are stated in stipulations. They assume readiness to act in certain specified ways. On this account, postulates are not arbitrarily chosen. They present claims to be met in the sense in which a claim presents a title or has authority to receive due consideration.[6]

According to the postulational reading of logical principles, all those who engage in inquiry are *committed* to reason in conformity with logical principles. Adopting these leading hypotheses is not assenting to a priori truths. And although conformity with them has been found to be necessary to the conduct of every successful inquiry, adopting such principles is not assenting to a posteriori truths. Postulation of a logical principle is, as Dewey says, assumption of a responsibility to adhere to the principle.

The postulational reading of logical principles does not reassure us, however, that the difference between logical and other methodological principles is a difference solely in the universality of the success of logical principles in the conduct of inquiry. Logical principles, or more generally principles of minimal rationality, may be revisable as Dewey insists just as methodological principles are. However, their universality precludes their revisability according to the same principles that regulate the modification of the other results of inquiry including the methodological principles with restricted domains of applicability.

Inquiry according to Dewey "is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole."[7] I prefer Peirce's assertion that the aim of inquiry is the removal of doubt. This is not merely predilection for one style of formulation over another. Peirce's characterization can readily be rephrased as involving a transformation of an initial state of doubt to a state in which the doubt is removed. This suggests that the transformation is of one *state of belief* by another (or more generally of *one point of view* by another if it is important to take into account attitudes other than full belief such as states of probability judgment and value judgment).

Dewey explicitly resisted formulations of this kind. An indeterminate situation, according to Dewey, is one that is doubtful.

It is the *situation* that has these traits. *We* are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful. Personal states of doubt that are not evoked by and are not relative to some existential situation are pathological; when they are extreme they constitute the mania of doubting. Consequently, situations that are disturbed and troubled, confused or obscure, cannot be straightened out, cleared up and put in order by manipulation of our personal states of mind. The attempt to settle them by such manipulations involves what psychiatrists call "withdrawal from reality." Such an attempt is pathological as far as it goes, and when it goes it is the source of some form of actual insanity. The habit of disposing of the doubtful as if it belonged only to *us* rather than to the existential situation in which we are caught and implicated is an inheritance of subjectivist psychology.[8]

Dewey was concerned to distinguish problem-solving inquiry from techniques for removal of doubt by some form of therapy such as the taking of a pill or undergoing hypnosis. He concluded that the doubts addressed by the inquirer should not be the inquirer's doubts. Instead, it should be the doubtfulness of the situation in which the inquirer is located.

Peirce adopted another strategy.[9] He considered various methods of "fixing" belief including methods that cover the kinds that Dewey wished to disown in his account of inquiry. He thought the method of tenacity, for example, is often very effective in removing doubts. He objected to it because he thought beliefs formed by means of the method would be undermined when others using the method of tenacity obtained conflicting views that could not be resolved using the same method.

Peirce's objections to the method of tenacity are not entirely convincing. Suppose that we could devise a pill that agents could take to alleviate the tensions arising when others disagree. Disagreement would not threaten the success of the method of tenacity. But Peirce did, nonetheless, make an important point. The success of an inquirer's efforts to remove doubt depends on his or her goals as well as the consequences of his or her efforts.

Although Peirce did say that removal of doubt is the sole end of inquiry, charity in interpretation suggests that we be careful in interpreting what he meant by "the sole end of inquiry." I think what he had in mind is that it is the sole feature common to the diverse goals of diverse inquirers. Peirce thought that inquiries that focused on the single dimension of removing doubt are threatened with self-defeat.

He suggested "that a method may be found by which our beliefs may be caused by nothing human, but by some external permanency."[10] The concern to remove doubt ought to be tempered by an interest in avoiding the importation of false belief. Peirce did not wish to claim that all inquirers seek to replace doubt by true belief. That claim would be false. He maintained, however, that the common features of the proximate aims of inquiries occasioned by doubt *ought to be* removal of doubt and avoidance of error. Taking a doubt-eliminating pill or pursuing some other therapy for eliminating doubt may be an excellent way to succeed if success is to relieve doubt without regard to other desiderata. It will be suboptimal if one is concerned to replace doubt by true belief.

Dewey also thought of inquiry as having goals. But Dewey did not seem to think that avoidance of false belief is a common desideratum of the proximate aims of well-conducted inquiries. So he could not avail himself of Peirce's approach. Instead, he held that, in inquiry, we seek to change situations – not states of belief or points of view.

Dewey had another motive for emphasizing changes in situations. According to Dewey, a situation is a state or episode of a system consisting of an organism in its environment. In his famous paper on the reflex arc, Dewey posited a process of an organism in its environment that is in some sort of disequilibrium modifying the organism/environment situation.[11] If successful a new equilibrium is attained. Dewey took this type of modification to be a common feature of the processes to which organism/environment systems are subject no matter how primitive or sophisticated the organism and the overall system might be. Appealing to this sort of "naturalistic continuity" between simple and complex systems of these sorts is integral to Dewey's naturalism. Problem-solving inquiry is deliberately or intentionally conducted activity where the inquiring agent in its environment (this being the situation) engages in removing some doubtful aspect of that situation.

Dewey appealed to structural similarities between the behaviors of non-human organisms when adjusting to their environments and the deliberate efforts of inquirers engaged in problem-solving. This way of "naturalizing" intentional behavior continues to find adherents. For example, biologists and economists have often recognized structural affinities between applications of game theoretical structures to the transactions of lower animals with other such animals and their

environments and the interactions of buyers and sellers on a market that can be characterized by the models of game theory.

There are no doubt formal similarities between the structure of economic applications of game theory and biological ones and between models of scientific inquiry (and practical deliberation) and processes of selection. If these considerations are to support the naturalization of inquiry, the applications of decision and game theory to human conduct must be explanatory and predictive.

As any aficionado of "bounded rationality" ought to recognize, the claim that standards of rational belief, evaluation and choice are explanatory and predictive of the behavior of humans is false. Standards of rational full belief require rational agents to fully believe all the logical consequences of their full beliefs, to make judgments of probability that recognize as permissible the use of probability measures to determine expected value that satisfy the requirements of the calculus of probabilities, and to recognize as permissible the use of utility judgments representable by functions that obey the von Neumann–Morgenstern requirements. Although Dewey seems to have at least tacitly supported informal versions of expected utility theory, it is unclear how much of it he would have endorsed had he considered it explicitly. But even advocates of alternative standards for assessing rational behavior replace the standards with alternatives that no one can fully obey.

It may, perhaps, be pointed out that both primitive organisms and deliberating agents sometimes approximate the behavior of rational players in a game and, with a good degree of approximation, tend to "solve" problems confronting them in situations of stress and disequilibrium by instituting modifications that lead to new equilibria. This point cannot help sustain the idea that simple organisms and human agents and the many species in between are all games players and problem solvers. The beliefs, evaluations and choices of deliberating agents carry intentions. The simulations of these attitudes found in other organisms do not. The difference is that the attitudes of deliberating agents are commitments to satisfy the principles of rational belief, evaluation and choice. And deliberating agents attempt to fulfill these commitments even though they often fail. Recall that Dewey himself says that in undertaking inquiries, agents are committed to obey requirements laid down in the logic of inquiry.

Dewey's acknowledgment of these commitments does not cohere well with his insistence that the attitudes that carry intentions in deliberately conducted inquiry are simulated by the dispositions to behavior of other organisms when involved in transactions with their environments.

Both human beings and other species extricate themselves from situations in manners that may be studied empirically. Models may be devised that provide explanations and predictions for their behaviors.

But it is misleading to construct explanatory and predictive models of the conduct of inquirers solving problems using propositional attitudes such as belief (judgment of truth), probability judgment, value judgment, judgment of serious possibility and the like as is common in psychology and the social sciences. To do so involves appeal to postulates of rationality as empirical laws regulating the conduct of inquirers. But human agents fail to satisfy the requirements for rational belief, rational probability judgment, rational valuation and rational decision-making. Using principles of rationality in models of health or ideal types will not help because the failures of rationality are massive.

One might try to construct models using the so-called propositional attitudes but without invoking principles of rationality as explanatory laws. The intelligibility of judgments of truth, of probability, of value and what is to be done would then be in serious jeopardy. As theoretical terms, "belief," "desire," "valuing," etc. would require postulates to *replace* the principles of rationality. This is crucial because bridge laws connecting such "theoretical terms" with bodily and linguistic behavior are not as readily available as one would like whether one uses principles of rationality or not. The individuation of attitudes by appealing to contents or meanings cannot be fleshed out in a fashion making such attitudes useful in explanation and prediction.

Theoretical models of human behavior relying on an appeal to such attitudes are hopeless for the purpose of explanation and prediction except for contexts where the complexity of calculations involved is not excessive and the agents are sober and healthy. If the psychology of the propositional attitudes has a useful application, it will be found elsewhere.

Insofar as postulates of rationality are "constitutive" of the attitudes, it is due to the understanding of the attitudes as commitments

explicated in terms of the postulates of rationality. Thus, to claim that X believes that *h* in the commitment sense is to claim that X is in a state of full belief or doxastic commitment that has as a logical consequence the potential state of full belief (or doxastic proposition) that *h*. In that state, X has undertaken to believe that *h* in the sense of a doxastic performance (i.e. a disposition to bodily and linguistic behavior or the manifestations of such dispositions). If X fully believes that *h* in the commitment sense, X fully believes in the commitment sense all logical consequences of *h* and X's state of full belief.

The "logical postulates" or norms of rationality so understood should not then be thought of as regularities that the beliefs in the performance sense of deliberating agents "by and large" obey (whatever the quantifier "by and large" means). Consider the injunction to fully believe all the logical consequences of one's full beliefs. Flesh and blood agent X may recognize some logical consequences. But X will be incapable of recognizing many others. The failure to satisfy the injunction is massive. Thus, the principle of rationality prescribing that X should believe in the performance sense the logical consequences of his beliefs fails miserably as a predictor of behavior. And it performs no better as an explanatory law.

Instead of thinking, as Dewey does, of the inquirer's state – the state that is "transformed in inquiry" – as the inquirer's *situation*, I propose to think of it as a state of *commitment*. The state of commitment cannot be merely the inquirer's state of full belief or doxastic commitment if we are to do justice to Dewey's views. We need to include other attitudes besides full belief – judgments of probability, value, and other attitudes. In short, the commitment is to a point of view – i.e. to a network of full beliefs, uncertainties and values that, if perfectly fulfilled would meet perfect standards of logicality or rationality.

I have noted that there are passages in Dewey's remarks that are supportive of the view that logical postulates are constraints on the commitments of agents. But the texts cannot support such an interpretation unless one thinks that the norms of rationality that characterize commitments are empirically grounded regularities as Dewey apparently did believe. This is the major false assumption that is an ingredient in Dewey's approach to inquiry as well as in

grandiose claims by game theorists to have applications in both biology and economics.

Whatever the merits of Dewey's vision of seeing simple organisms and species of increasing degrees of complexity as following a similar process of responding to trouble of the sort he described in his account of the reflex arc, I deny that it can be extended to provide an explanatory account of the conduct of problem-solving inquiry.

Yet, it would be a serious mistake to throw out the baby with the bathwater. Many of Dewey's insights may be retained by replacing his characterization of inquiry as concerned with transforming one situation (the indeterminate one) into another (the determinate one) with inquiry concerned with replacing one commitment to a point of view by another.

Notice that what are changed here are commitments and not the performances that fulfill the commitments – i.e. the behaviors and dispositions that attempt to fulfill these commitments and succeed or fail to varying degrees. The distinction between beliefs, goals, values, etc. taken as *commitments* undertaken and beliefs, goals, values, etc. as *performances* that attempt to fulfill these commitments captures the difference between the states transformed through inquiry and those changed by therapy, training, and the use of prosthetic devices better than Dewey's contrast between situations and subjective states. Fits of doubt may be manipulated in ways that, as Dewey said, are pathological even if release from the fits is successfully achieved. The agent who suffers from fits of doubt even when committed to an answer that removes such doubt is suffering from a pathology. In such cases, relief does not come from more inquiry (none is necessary) but from some form of therapy or training. Sometimes the use of devices that facilitate computation will help. The removal of doubt in such cases is not the product of inquiry. In inquiry, one removes doubt understood as a commitment to suspension of judgment. Changing such commitments involves an undertaking. And one should not undertake such changes without justification.

Thus, replacing a commitment to a point of view where a question that troubles the agent is unanswered with a commitment to a point of view that contains an answer to the question can, if the demands put on acceptable answers are well conceived, avoid the anxiety about subjectivity that led Dewey to think of inquiry as the

transformation of indeterminate to determinate situations. Pathological cases of doubting and believing occur. These call for therapy rather than inquiry. Dewey and I agree on this point. But unlike Dewey's view, the proposal does not concern the "transaction" involving an organism in its environment. It is normative in a way that cannot be reduced to and does not "supervene" on such transactions.

According to the reform of Dewey's view of inquiry and the role of logic in it that I am proposing, the agent begins in a state of commitment (to full belief, probability judgment, value judgment, etc.). These commitments are changed or created by the actions of the agent. Such actions may be bodily or linguistic behaviors, fits of conviction or the acquisition of dispositions to such things. The actions taken generate changes in commitments much as promises or contracts do. What the changes in commitment amount to depends on the agent's initial state of commitment and the context in which the agent acts. In this respect, the actions that change commitments do, indeed, resemble Deweyite transactions. In the case of full belief, the logic of full belief commits agent X to fully believe all the logical consequences of X's full beliefs, to conform to the dictates of positive and negative introspection, and judge as seriously possible all and only those potential beliefs to whose negations the agent is not committed. The agent changes this doxastic commitment by engaging in linguistic behavior or in other forms of action that express a coming to full belief or coming to doubt. The dispositions and behaviors that fulfill these commitments are in general specifiable only in a very limited and partial manner and in a highly context-dependent manner. Although the agent who undertakes a commitment must perform some action, there is no specific type of action that is necessary to the undertaking.

If agent X is committed to fully believing that h but behaves in a manner that reveals anxiety and doubt as to whether h is true or false, X's performance fails to fulfill X's commitments. Such behavior could be pathological in the way Dewey describes. Pathological or not, X is in need of some form of therapy to bring X's behavior into better conformity with X's commitments. Similarly, if X fails to recognize the logical consequences of X's full beliefs, X stands in need of either therapy, lessons in logic, or good computational or other prosthetic devices in order to improve X's performance.

I have proposed an alteration in Dewey's view of the "ultimate subject-matter" of logic. Instead of considering transformations of *situations*, I suggest considering transformations of *commitments to points of view*. In doing so, I exploit an idea already to be found in Dewey – namely, the idea that attitudes are commitments characterized by the principles of logic.

I think this modification of Dewey's vision improves the clarity of Dewey's account at least to the extent that it brings into focus some problems with his understanding of logic. It also avoids the mysteries of Dewey's naturalism at which I gestured before. And yet it commits no hostages to the forms of supernaturalism for which Dewey quite rightly had little use.

Notice that the applications of logic thus far considered are "synchronic" in the sense that they characterize doxastic commitments at a given time or, perhaps better, in a single context. This raises another puzzle. According to Dewey, logic is concerned with inquiry understood as the transformation of an initial situation that includes conditions for doubt into a state in which those conditions are removed. This includes not only conditions of synchronic rationality that commitments to points of view should rationally satisfy but also prescriptions for modifying commitments to points of view.

Whether recommendations for modifying commitments to points of view are principles of diachronic logic or rationality is a terminological issue of small importance. But insofar as logical principles are understood to constrain what is to count as a commitment to full belief, probability judgment, value judgment, etc., there are no principles of diachronic rationality or logic. We should stand with Aristotle against Hegel. If, for example, rational X were committed to updating credal probability judgment by temporal credal conditionalization utilizing Bayes' theorem, rational X would be saddled with X's prior probability judgments. There would be no basis for regretting prior probability judgment. X's future credal probabilities would be controlled by X's initial state of credal probability judgment.

Properly conducted inquiry engaged in changing points of view presupposes a conception of points of view and the logical conditions such points of view ought to satisfy. These logical or rationality conditions are synchronic. That is to say, the logical conditions are *not* prescriptions for changing commitments to points of view.

They do constrain the way in which the dispositions and manifestations of such dispositions should change in order to better fulfill the commitments already in force. They characterize conditions of "rational equilibrium."

Clearly not all prescriptions concerning how one ought to think are used to characterize attitudinal commitments whose satisfaction secure rational equilibrium. Transforming one rational equilibrium state to another or changing from commitment to a point of view to another such commitment is justified by showing that the change promotes the goals of the inquiry.

Recall Dewey's claim that the logical forms "are concerned with control of inquiry so that it may yield warranted assertions." Consider the conditions on what constitutes a warranted assertion or justified conclusion at the end of inquiry. Do these conditions constrain conclusions as to what is to be done or believed "all things considered"? If that were Dewey's view, the warranted assertion would not be a choice in the sense in which choosing is undertaking to commit to a new point of view. It would be a recommendation that such a commitment ought to be made. Such a prescription is derived from the principles of deductive logic, probability judgment, value judgment and rational choice relative to the all-things-considered point of view. The all-things-considered point of view is substantive so that the prescription as to what is to be done cannot be considered to be a principle of rationality or logic. It is, however, a product of synchronic principles of rationality and the all-things-considered point of view. As we shall see, Dewey's warranted assertion is not the recommendation that a new commitment ought to be undertaken. It is the undertaking of the new commitment.

The prescription as to what is to be done does not commit the agent who makes the judgment to the undertaking so prescribed. If the prescription committed the agent to the undertaking in virtue of such a principle of rationality, the principle would perforce be a diachronic principle of rationality. The all-things-considered point of view would be both the state of commitment to be changed and a commitment to the changed point of view that perforce is incompatible with it. This is inconsistent. Dewey explicitly acknowledged this point.

> The results of deliberation as to what it is *better to do* are, obviously, not identical with the final issue for the sake of which the deliberative inquiries

are undertaken. For the final issue is some new situation in which the difficulties and troubles which elicited the deliberation are done away with; in which they no longer *exist*. This objective end cannot be attained by conjuring with mental states. It is an end brought about only by means of existential changes. The question for deliberation is what to do in order to effect these changes. They are means to the required existential reconstruction; *a fortiori*, the inquiries and decisions which issue in performance of these acts are instrumental and intermediary. But what should be done depends upon the conditions that exist in the given situation and hence require a declarative or enunciatory proposition: "The actual conditions are so-and-so." These conditions are the ground of inference to a declarative proposition that such and such an act is the one best calculated to produce the desired issue under the factual conditions ascertained.[12]

Dewey drew a distinction between a *proposition* that is "affirmed" and a *judgment* that is "asserted."[13] Propositions come in two varieties distinguished by their "functional place" in judgment: (1) the information accepted as the product of previous inquiries and now used as evidence in the current inquiry – subject of course to revision as the inquiry develops; (2) conjectures that in the course of inquiry have been identified as potential answers to the problem under investigation and the conditional assessments as to what would be or might be the outcome of appropriate experimental trials on the supposition that these conjectures are true.[14] The propositions considered under (1) correspond roughly to the inquirer's state of full belief. The propositions under (2) include both the potential answers to the question under investigation and the conditionals teasing out testable consequences of the potential answers.

A *judgment* is, in effect, a decision to adopt one of the potential answers. Such a judgment is expressed by an assertion. If the assertion is grounded in the evidence expressed in the propositions affirmed in the all-things-considered state of belief including the proposition that a specific potential answer is the best to adopt given the aims of the inquiry, it is a warranted assertion. According to the proposed reconstruction of Dewey's view suggested here, the judgment is an undertaking to change the previous state of commitment to a point of view to a new state of commitment to a point of view by removing the doubt that occasioned the inquiry.

Dewey recognized the potential answers as analogues of options available in a decision problem. In general, he structured an inquiry to

remove doubt along the same lines as he would a deliberation to realize some practical end. Consequently, he understood the propositions (both the conjectures and the settled evidence) as means to serve the ends of inquiry. As means he contended that such propositions are neither true nor false.

> Means are effective or ineffective; pertinent or irrelevant; wasteful or economical, the criterion for the difference being found in the consequences with which they are connected as means. On this score special propositions are *valid* (strong, effective) or *invalid* (weak, inadequate); loose or rigorous, etc.[15]

Dewey's view to the contrary notwithstanding, the fact that propositions serve as means does not imply that they lack truth-values. The pertinent question is whether their having truth-values is relevant to their functioning as means. And the answer to this question is that sometimes truth-value is relevant and sometimes not.

Whether truth-value is relevant depends upon the proximate goals of the inquiry. These goals determine the "consequences with which they are connected as means." If the proximate goal of inquiry is the replacement of doubt by true belief concerning the answer to a given question, whether the potential answers to a given question are true or false is a matter of considerable relevance. And the truth conditions for such potential answers are specified on the assumption that currently available information or evidence is true, i.e. the current state of belief is true. Truth is judged relative to the evolving doctrine as Quine says.

To be sure, one can deny that avoidance of false belief is a desideratum in inquiry. But that is precisely the point. It is not enough to argue as Dewey does that because potential answers to a question and the evidence used to appraise them are means to an end, they are not in any relevant sense truth-value-bearing. The relevance of truth-value depends on the kind of ends provoking the inquiry.

The question of the relevance of truth-value is complicated by the fact that propositions in Dewey's sense – i.e. "means" – include both background (full) beliefs as well as conjectures, assessments of uncertainty or probability and evaluations of consequences. Dewey is right to deny that *such* propositions carry truth-values. But it is not their status as means that supports this conclusion. As just noted, other means in inquiry (the initial state of full belief that constitutes the

background against which the inquiry begins) as means or propositions (in Dewey's sense) do carry truth-value.

When inquiry is terminated by deciding to implement one of the options or potential solutions, a judgment is made. If the inquiry is properly conducted, the judgment asserted is a warranted assertion.

As Dewey wrote, the "declarative *proposition* that such and such an act is the one best calculated to produce the desired issue under the factual conditions ascertained."[16] Dewey clearly intended to characterize the situation as it is understood from the "all-things-considered point of view" prior to choosing and implementing this recommendation. Dewey and I agree in denying that the recommendation expressed in the declarative proposition commits the inquirer to a new point of view or transforms the indeterminate situation into a determinate one. It is the choice to follow the recommendation (the assertion) that transforms.

As a consequence, Dewey should deny, as I do, that the recommendation as to what to do according to the all-things-considered point of view commits the agent to the choice and implementation of that recommendation. That is so as long as we think of logical principles as part of a contract for the conduct of inquiry mentioned by Dewey. What can be said is that the prescriptions made according to the all-things-considered point of view *recommend* or *prescribe* what the agent ought to do without *committing* the agent to following the prescriptions.

Reaching an all-things-considered proposition or recommendation takes time. But the activity involved is aimed at efforts to identify the agent's current commitments and to fulfill them. The norms that are used to determine the commitments are not, however, prescriptions for change in commitment. They are conditions on the attitudes of the agent in the context where all things are considered. The deliberation is focused on making recommendations for change of the all-things-considered point of view. But the inquirer is not committed thereby to implementing them.

Of course, there remain the challenges of fulfilling the commitments determined (in part) by principles of synchronic rationality. But the information that may be invoked in this activity additional to these principles will concern the devising of therapies, prosthetic devices and skills that enable the agent to fulfill the commitments and to behave with rational coherence.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that if the injunction to restrict choice to options that are admissible all things considered is a norm of rationality, it is a principle of synchronic rationality. Strictly speaking, the injunction does not restrict choice but rather conclusions or judgments as to what is to be chosen. For the agent X to choose an admissible option according to the all-things-considered point of view is for X to conform to the recommendations based on the all-things-considered point of view and, in that sense, to be justified in making the choice. But if X fails to make such a decision – e.g. by choosing an inadmissible option – X has not failed to fulfill a commitment.

Donald Davidson held that the weak-willed man "acts, and judges, irrationally, for this is what we must say of a man who goes against his own best judgment."[17] The akratic violates a "principle of incontinence" that recommends performing the action judged best on the basis of all available relevant reasons. But if the agent is not committed to performing the action recommended by the principle of incontinence as formulated by Davidson, the principle of incontinence is not a principle of synchronic rationality. The akratic is not therefore someone in need of therapy, a prosthetic aid, or further training and education. The akratic refuses to make the judgment whose assertion is warranted by the proposition recommending what is to be done according to the all-things-considered point of view prior to making the judgment. The akratic's inquiries end in failure – precisely because his or her assertions are not warranted.

Contrast the akratic case with one where the decision-maker mistakenly believes prior to the moment of choice that he or she has control over what he or she will choose. In this case the decision-maker is impotent and self-deceived on this point – not akratic. The deliberations of the impotent, like those of the akratic, are indeed for nought. But the impotent does not deliberately choose to fail. The akratic does. Both the impotent and the akratic decision-makers can be as completely rational as their decision problems require. Acknowledging that the impotent agent is rationally coherent is tolerable. The akratic, however, deliberately reneges on his or her all-things-considered judgment as to what to do. We may share Dewey's (and Davidson's) disapproval of this behavior. We may disapprove because it intentionally renders deliberation pointless. But it does not render the conclusion of the deliberation rationally incoherent. Nor does it render the commitments undertaken by flouting that conclusion irrational.

Dewey wished to explore the logic of propositions as means in inquiry in terms of the functions different types of propositions perform in facilitating the judgment recommended at the end of inquiry. Conjectures, conditionals, evidence all qualify as propositions according to Dewey. According to most contemporary views, these items would be considered different types of propositional attitudes – not different types of propositions. To conjecture that *h* is to propose *h* as a potential answer to a question under study. It is to judge it possible that *h* is true and that it is false. That is to say, it is to hold *h* in suspense. Conditionals are judgments that *h* is possible or impossible on a supposition that *f*. What is accepted as evidence is judged true with absolute certainty (although it is subject to revision in future inquiry). Thus, Dewey's program may be redescribed as attempting to characterize different propositional attitudes in terms of their functions in inquiry.

Dewey's account of the functions of these diverse attitudes is based on his vision of the common pattern of all inquiries. Dewey saw inquiry as involving two broad phases or tasks: the formation of ideas and the experimental testing of these ideas. The difference between Dewey's dualism and Peirce's trinitarian identification of three tasks is not as great as it might seem. Abduction is focused on the identification of potential answers to the question under study, deduction on the elaboration of testable consequences of the conjectures thus formed, and induction concerns the institution of experiments and evaluating the potential answers based on the results.[18] Dewey's ideas correspond to the conjectures formed via abduction together with the elaboration of their testable consequences corresponding to deduction. And his evaluations of the results of experiment correspond to Peirce's induction.

Dewey's account lacks Peirce's sophistication and originality concerning the assimilation of induction into statistical reasoning. What should impress us, however, is Dewey's emphasis on the function of the attitudes in inquiry in addressing the agenda set out according to the pattern of inquiry.

Thus, Dewey's approach invites his readers to consider the differences between (a) the attitude of accepting *h* as evidence, (b) the attitude of accepting *h* as a potential answer to a question, and (c) the suppositional reasoning involved in inference from a supposition that *h* and that an experimental intervention is to be instituted to

a hypothetical prediction as to whether *g* must or might be so. These types of appraisals are all propositions in Dewey's sense and are taken to have epistemological and logical significance because of their contributions to the performance of the tasks laid down by inquiry in moving from an indeterminate to a determinate situation.

Here is one way of taking Dewey's vision seriously.

An inquirer begins, as Dewey would admit, with a substantial amount of background information taken for granted. Much of it is irrelevant to the problem under investigation. The investigator needs to take stock by identifying relevant bits of information that he or she can use as evidence. The investigator must also identify potential solutions to the problem under investigation and elaborate the testable consequences of the conjectures identified. And the investigator must design and run relevant experiments and make relevantly controlled observations. All of this effort is intended to elaborate an all-relevant-things-considered point of view according to which X can render a verdict as to which potential solution should be adopted.

Taking Dewey's vision seriously is articulating a system of attitudes ingredient in the all-things-considered appraisal. Dewey himself explicitly saw the potential solution proposed for adoption as based on an argument showing it to be a proposition as a means to the given end that is to be affirmed. He understood this to be so whether or not the inquiry was a commonsense inquiry concerned with use and enjoyment or an inquiry in pure science. Such means should, in my judgment, be distinguished from other attitudes Dewey recognized as means in inquiry. The inquirer needs to introduce a space of potential answers as part of the conversion of an indeterminate situation to a problematic one. These answers should not only be serious possibilities but relevant answers to the questions under study. One needs to evaluate these potential answers with respect to the value of the new information they provide and with respect to the risk of error that would be incurred by adding them to the state of full belief. How the institution of experimental interventions can lead to modification of the state of full belief (or the standard for serious possibility) in a manner that adds new "data" pertinent to the investigation needs to be elaborated. And the criteria for engaging in ampliative or inductive expansion of the resulting state of full belief in a way that recommends a solution to the problem under investigation has to be undertaken.

Dewey did not undertake this kind of project in detail. But his conception of logic invites the development of this type of structure or some variant on it. Within this kind of project, full belief, probability judgment, conjecture, etc., all are characterized in terms of their role in the inquiry just as Dewey would have required.

There are, however, two features that Dewey would have insisted on installing in this conception of inquiry – one of which I admire and the other I do not. And there is one lacuna in the Deweyite picture – a lack that is also found in Peirce's account of inquiry.

Both Peirce and Dewey take for granted that inquiry begins with doubt and ends with the removal of doubt. Both authors, therefore, are concerned with conditions under which inquirers are warranted in removing doubt. Neither insists that the information used to remove the doubt be derived from impeccable first premises. They do insist on justification of the addition of new information to a store of full belief. And they both insist that the full beliefs are subject to correction and modification.

Unfortunately, however, neither author addresses the question of specifying the conditions under which removing settled assumptions is warranted. Formal aspects of this issue have been discussed with considerable sophistication in the literature on belief change that has developed in recent years. Efforts to find a way to accommodate the insights of this literature into the programs of Peirce and Dewey ought to be worthwhile.[19]

The feature of Dewey's vision of inquiry I do not admire concerns his casual way with the issue of truth. According to Dewey, even in scientific inquiry, avoidance of error in forming new beliefs is not a desideratum. The results of scientific inquiry are, so it seems, instrumental to facilitating use and enjoyment. Scientists may pursue theoretical inquiries for their own sakes. But the value of theories does not depend upon whether they are true or false. In opposition to Dewey I favor a modest and secular realism that recognizes avoidance of error as a desideratum in scientific inquiry.[20]

The great virtue of Dewey's vision of inquiry is his recognition that the logic of scientific inquiry can be generalized so as to regulate all aspects of problem-solving activity. In contrast to Peirce, Dewey contended that the structure of problem-solving inquiry could be seen in moral problem-solving, in the production and criticism of works of art, and in politics. In these respects, he sought to undermine

widely prevalent views according to which there is a deep abyss separating science from other aspects of our culture. The abyss was to be bridged at least in part by noting the extent to which all of these activities would benefit from an understanding of the logic of inquiry.

NOTES

1. J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *LW* 12:9.
2. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 11.
3. See G. Frege, *The Basic Laws of Arithmetic*, ed. and trans. M. Furth (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 14–15; and G. Frege, *Posthumous Writings*, ed. H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, and F. Kaulbach, trans. P. Long and R. White (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp. 2–7.
4. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 13.
5. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 21; emphasis in the original.
6. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 24.
7. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 108; emphasis in the original.
8. Dewey, *Logic*, pp. 109–110; emphasis in the original.
9. C. S. Peirce, *Writings of Charles S. Peirce*, 6 vols. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), vol. III, chapter 60.
10. Peirce, *Writings of Charles S. Peirce*, vol. III, p. 253.
11. J. Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), *EW* 5:96–110.
12. Dewey, *Logic*, pp. 163–164; emphasis in the original.
13. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 123.
14. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 288.
15. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 287; emphasis in the original.
16. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 164; my emphasis added.
17. D. Davidson, *Actions and Events* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 41.
18. For more on Peirce, see I. Levi, "Induction as Self-correcting According to Peirce," in *Science, Belief and Behaviour: Essays in Honour of R. B. Braithwaite*, ed. D. H. Mellor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 127–140, and I. Levi, "Beware of Syllogism: Statistical Reasoning and Conjecturing According to Peirce," in *The Cambridge Companion to Peirce*, ed. C. Misak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 257–286.
19. See I. Levi, *The Fixation of Belief and its Undoing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), and I. Levi, *Mild Contraction: Evaluating Loss of Information Due to Loss of Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
20. See Levi, *The Fixation of Belief and its Undoing*, and Levi, "Induction as Self-correcting According to Peirce."

J. E. TILES

5 The primacy of practice in Dewey's experimental empiricism

NATURE AND EXPERIENCE

Dewey explained that the title of the book setting out his mature philosophy, *Experience and Nature*, was intended to signify to readers that what he was offering could be thought of either as "empirical naturalism or naturalistic empiricism." He anticipated that many would greet either of these as an oxymoron – "like talking of a round square" – because their conception of nature was of "something wholly material and mechanistic," which had no place for experience except "as something extraneous, which is occasionally superimposed on nature."[1] Among existing philosophies that professed to base their concepts and doctrines on experience and could claim to be versions of "empiricism," none conceived experience as a natural phenomenon like rain, retro-viruses or retrograde motion of the planets. But even now, after the concept of a "naturalized epistemology" has become commonplace, the concept of experience on which Dewey hoped to base his naturalized empiricism is not widely appreciated, let alone accepted. Locating experience as *in and a part of* nature was only a relatively modest part of the radical reform Dewey was proposing.

The entry for "empiricism" in a recently published encyclopedia of philosophy offers a useful point of departure. Empiricism – whether it appears as a doctrine of epistemology or a theory of meaning – "stresses the fundamental role of experience ... It is [however] difficult to give an illuminating analysis of 'experience'. Let us say that it includes any mode of consciousness in which something seems to be presented to the subject, as contrasted with the mental activity of thinking about things."[2] This account is an attempt to be ecumenical

and accommodate both phenomenalist and physicalist conceptions of what "seems to be presented to the subject"; that is, it applies both to those who insist that experience directly supports only beliefs about what is present to the subject's conscious awareness and to those who allow that experience may also directly support beliefs about the physical (natural) environment. Dewey does not merely side with the latter. He goes on to call for a reconstruction of the concept of experience: *root* – in experience the subject is not a passive recipient of information – *and branch* – experience is not confined to modes of consciousness.

The idea that there might be room for empiricism to make radical departures from the tradition established two centuries earlier by Locke and Hume had been mooted by William James, who before his death in 1910 had conceived of publishing a collection of his articles under the title "Essays in Radical Empiricism" (a book of this title appeared posthumously). In 1903 James had greeted the publication of work by and under Dewey at Chicago as evidence of "a flourishing school of radical empiricism."[3] James's summary of his own radical empiricism consisted of a methodological restriction ("that the only things debatable among philosophers shall be things definable in terms drawn from experience"), and an expansion in the conception of what was to count as an object of experience, specifically to relations between things ("conjunctive as well as disjunctive"), including the relations that hold successive parts of experience together.[4]

Dewey's reconstruction of the concept of experience not only included the conditions under which experience might arise as a natural phenomenon, it involved conceiving in a new way what constitutes experience and what was required for a subject to be able to undergo experience. The experience on which Dewey proposed to base his empiricism is not appropriately conceived as one-way traffic from somewhere (the physical environment, or an "external world," about which we can only conjecture), but as an interaction between a creature and its environment. This interaction may be usefully compared to the activity that results in the ingestion and digestion of the food that sustains an animal's life. A plant passively receives energy from a source of radiant energy, which it binds chemically and stores for release in the chemical reactions that sustain its metabolism. An animal must actively seek and assimilate stores of energy; to identify

stores that it can assimilate the animal has behavior routines, which allow it to respond selectively to stimuli in its environment. To the extent that the physical interactions that an animal undergoes result in the reinforcement or the adaptive modification of its routines, these interactions constitute its experience.

Human experience, of course, includes interactions in which conscious awareness plays a role, but experience must be understood as not made up exclusively of such interactions. Experience is not confined to modes of consciousness; significant parts of human experience take place subconsciously. Humans may await and accumulate what is presented (as data, i.e. as given) to their modes of consciousness as passively as plants collect energy from the Sun. But one will not understand human experience if this pattern of response is considered in isolation from the wider patterns of activity that stand to be modified by what is received. Whether we are considering only the simplest of animals capable of experience or the most sophisticated, not all that is present (as "given") is taken; and to understand the selectivity manifest in what is taken we must refer to the animal's ongoing activity and to the routines that structure its activity. The subject of experience is not a passive recipient of information; it is an active creature adapting its routines, modifying its habits, reconfiguring its dispositions, and it is the effect on its routines, habits or dispositions that determines what parts of the given the animal has taken (deliberately or otherwise) to constitute its experience.

FROM NATURALIZED EPISTEMOLOGY TO EXPERIMENTAL EMPIRICISM

It is instructive to contrast this with the way Quine proposed to conceive the subject of experience in the chapter that, nearly two decades after Dewey's death, established "naturalized epistemology" as a recognized approach to knowledge in analytic philosophy. "Epistemology ... studies a natural phenomenon, viz. a physical human subject. This human subject is accorded a certain experimentally controlled input – certain patterns of irradiation in assorted frequencies, for instance – and in the fullness of time the subject delivers as output a description of the three-dimensional external world and its history."[5] An explanation of the connection of input to output in Quine's schema may well have to appeal to the routines,

habits, or dispositions of the subject, but the subject of his naturalized epistemology is the output, the representation of the world and its history, not the routines, habits, or dispositions of the system that generates and employs this representation.

According to Dewey's naturalized empiricism, an account of how a representation such as this is related to (generated from) sensory input is worthless unless we grasp how such representations will be used by the subject in its routines, habits, or dispositions. What Dewey's naturalized empiricism focuses on is the development of experience conceived as accumulated modifications to habitual responses and on the enhancement that occurs when the use of instruments (cognitive as well as physical) is incorporated into experience conceived in this way. In identifying experience as modification of habits Dewey echoes a classical approach. Aristotle assigned both *epistêmê* and *technê* to the genus *hexis* (a dispositional state; Latin, *habitus*).[6] Further echoes of classical conceptions emerge if we inquire about the role of "experiment" in these two versions of naturalism in epistemology.

Quine speaks of "experimentally controlled input." What is not clear is who is exercising the control – the subject of the investigation or the investigator. What is unequivocally clear is that for Dewey the human subjects under scrutiny need themselves to be conceived as experimenting. Dewey recommends focusing on situations where the human (or in general the animal) subject is under pressure to modify the nexus of dispositions that it is bringing to bear in the situation, but which is yielding results that are unsatisfactory. The dispositions may be in the discriminations it is relying on as well as in the physical responses it is making. If sophisticated enough, the subject may try to modify available instruments (including representations of the situation) or the way it employs them.

The notion of making a trial of something appears in the etymology of the Greek word for experience, *empeiria*: *en* plus *peira*, the latter translated "trial," "attempt," "experiment" (from the verb *peiraô*, to "attempt," "undertake," "try"). An empiricism that neglects the activity of the subject of experience is hardly faithful to its etymological roots, and from this standpoint "experimental empiricism" would be a pleonasm. But the modern empiricist tradition that extends from John Locke to twentieth-century logical empiricism attends only to what "seems to be presented to the subject." To the extent that it was

inspired by logical empiricism, "[p]hilosophical analysis of experiment was typically simplistic, focusing on the role of observation alone as the foundation for experimental facts."[7]

It is true that with all his repeated emphasis on the importance of experiment in modern science Dewey did nothing to advance the task of understanding "how experimental results and procedures bec[o]me stabilized and validated."[8] But the rhetorical point that the success of modern science rests on the active control – not merely of the conditions of observation but of the behavior of the subject-matter under observation – does not require an analysis of how experimental procedure becomes reproducible. The conclusion Dewey wanted to draw upon and to generalize was that natural science had moved on from its modest classical achievements by enhancing its observational foundation through a form of practice that involves physical interaction with the subject of its investigation. Although "naturalized empiricism" no longer bears the flavor of paradox nor distinguishes Dewey's position, "experimental empiricism" can be used to identify what remains distinctive about Dewey's approach, namely an empiricism that is based on a conception of experience as the development of the dispositions of an active subject.

KNOWLEDGE IN THE CONTEXT OF PRACTICE

The human subject in Quine's conception must of course in some sense be active, if only cognitively. Input is processed to generate a representation. But can a plausible story be told if the subject is treated purely as an input/output system? Can we dispense with reference to the subject's physical actions, material projects, or economic interests? Minimally, Dewey would insist, there must also be an identification of the subject's goals. Without this we cannot identify the elements of the nexus of habits (of discrimination and of response) that the subject may bring to bear, nor can we appreciate the role of any cognitive instruments (laws, models, theories, etc.) that the subject may possess and the likely modes of their employment. The activities of the subject of an experimental empiricism must, like the activities of a living creature in classical philosophy, be conceived as teleologically structured. After all, how a subject's activities are directed (toward what end) will affect how it selects from the givens that are presented to it, which of its habits of

discrimination are likely to undergo modification if it finds itself frustrated, and (for the sophisticated subject) which of the representations it relies on for guidance are likely to need to be reconstructed or reemployed.

What is meant here by a "sophisticated subject" is one that is capable of using a system of symbols, and hence, as Dewey uses the term "cognitive," is capable of cognitive interactions with its environment. Cognitive interactions are to be distinguished from unmediated responses to stimuli, in that the subject can delay its response while experimenting (in thought or with physical actions) under the guidance of "ideas" or "propositions" – representations of possible responses and the outcomes that would follow those responses. The conclusion of this process is a "judgment" expressing the selection the subject makes from the alternative possibilities (expressed as propositions) it has represented to itself.[9] Given the importance of the way the activity that constitutes the basis of a subject's experience is teleologically structured, the judgments that Dewey classifies as "practical" provide the most inclusive context for understanding the natural phenomena of experience.

Practical judgments, and the propositions from which they are selected, Dewey explained, are distinguished by their subject-matter. They deal with things to be done with situations demanding action. He offered a six-point characterization of practical judgments:[10] (1) they involve "an incomplete situation," something objective that is lacking in a situation; (2) the judgment identifying what is to be done and how to go about it will be a factor in completing the situation; (3) of the possible ways of completing the situation, some are better than others and the judgment to be made will be "a factor in securing (as far as may be) the better"; (4) what is given (the incomplete situation) is not only to be treated as the judgment indicates, but admits of being so treated; (5) the judgment of what is to be done implies statements of fact about the situation, the course to be pursued and the means to be employed in the pursuit; (6) whether a practical judgment has been correctly made will be determined by trying the course of action indicated. (Dewey expresses this last point by saying "The event or issue of such action *is* the truth or falsity of the judgment."[11])

Judgments of fact are located in this account under the fifth item and Dewey concludes by asking how far it would be possible to generalize this and say "all scientific or descriptive statements of

matters of fact [imply] indirectly if not directly, something to be done, future possibilities to be realized in action."[12] Unable or unwilling at that point to attempt to argue for this claim, Dewey leaves his readers to consider the "hypothesis that all judgments of fact have a reference to a determination of courses of action to be tried and to the discovery of means for their realization," and suggests that "this theory" is what should be called "pragmatism." Whatever its value, he adds, it is "quite free from dependence upon a voluntaristic psychology" and "not complicated by reference to emotional satisfactions or the play of desires."[13] Clearly Dewey hoped to distance his version of "pragmatism" from that espoused by those who had embraced the tendency expressed in William James's apologia for the "the will [or the right] to believe."

What troubled Dewey about the idea of pragmatism that James had fostered was the suggestion that we should be content to find "value in terms of consequences in life of some formula which has its logical content already fixed,"[14] rather than seek "to criticize and revise and, ultimately, to constitute the meaning of the formula"[15] in terms of its projected consequences – the tendency to seek to "vivify" rather than to "validate" the formula, as he put it.[16] Dewey found James attributing to him the claim that "truth is what gives satisfaction";[17] apart from doubting he had ever used the phrase "gives satisfaction" in this connection, Dewey insisted that any satisfaction would be specific to what the formula intended (meant).[18] Drinking a liquid to test the proposition that it is a poison, he observed dryly, may have unwelcome consequences but these will in no way "detract from the verifying force of the consequences."[19]

THE ROLE OF VALUE AND THE FUNCTION OF SCIENCE

To see more clearly what is not entailed by the claim that "all judgments of fact have a reference to courses of action to be tried," it helps to examine the main ways an inquiry may have to develop before it can terminate in a practical judgment. Inquiry, according to Dewey, is undertaken when a subject confronts an indeterminate situation. As a judgment of practice begins with an incomplete situation, if inquiry is called for, it must be indeterminate how the situation is to be completed. This does not necessarily mean that it is totally

indeterminate what the situation calls for. We may be shopping for clothes (Dewey's example), dealing with a sick patient, considering the design of an implement. What is not determinate is what to buy, how to treat the patient, which design to adopt. Inquiry will proceed by proposing and evaluating alternative courses of action.

To reach a practical judgment may well require a judgment of value, that is a determination of which of the available alternatives are better (value) than others. The third condition noted above under which a practical judgment is formed was, after all, that there are better and worse outcomes. The traits of the projected outcome of each proposed course of action need to be compared to the alternatives in terms of better and worse. "A determination of better value as found in some one suit [of clothes] is equivalent to (has the force of) a decision as to what it is better to do."[20] Likewise for the value of a course of treatment or a design. What was lacking in the situation (clothes, health, an implement) determines the relevant traits: price, style, durability for clothes; effectiveness, speed of action, possible side effects for treatment; weight, cost, ease of handling for an implement. These traits exist independently of the judgment of value, but they acquire their status as valued through the function they perform in the determination of which proposed course of action is to be adopted. "[T]he judgment of value is never complete in itself, but always in behalf of determining what is to be done."[21]

But problematic indeterminateness may also lie in the fifth item of the account given above, the facts of the situation. Is this cut still in style? Does this fabric wear well? Is this patient harboring a parasite? What will be the effects of taking this medication? Is this implement likely to be used for extended periods of time? How difficult to handle will this distribution of weight be? All these may be accurately determined without the situation being completed. "Completeness [however] is not so much an additional requirement as it is a condition of accuracy. For accuracy depends fundamentally upon relevancy to the determination of what is to be done."[22] Inquiry may focus on facts because facts are what are indeterminate and inquiry into facts may be completed and the facts determined independently of reaching the judgment of practice that frames the inquiry. But if, as Dewey understands it, logic is inquiry into inquiry, it is a logical mistake to ignore the questions of practice that frame inquiries into fact. "All purely logical terms and propositions fall

within the scope of the class of propositions of inquiry as a special form of propositions of practice."[23]

The implication that to understand fully any scientific investigation one must take account of the practice that frames the investigation will be resisted by those who believe in a sharp distinction between theory and practice and who regard the former as the chief and noble product of scientific investigation and the latter merely as a source of inspiration or of validation. But "[I]t is not true that to insist that scientific propositions fall within the domain of practice is to depreciate them. On its face, the insistence means simply that all knowledge involves experimentation, with whatever appliances are suited to the problem in hand, of an active and physical type."[24] The reason it seems to so many of us that what science does is independent of any practical question to which its theoretical products may be applied, is that science is a specialized mode of practice – "such a specialized mode of practice that it does not appear to be a mode of practice at all."[25] Its products are instruments to be used to reduce, where possible, the indeterminateness in what would otherwise arise in the factual aspects of practical inquiries, but as a productive practice it works to make its products as versatile as possible.

Everyday modes of practice, and the inquiries that stabilize them, are commonly tied to the specific interests of the practitioners who engage in them. "Science or theory means a system of objects[26] detached from any particular personal standpoint, and therefore available for any and every possible personal standpoint."[27] We achieve a modest degree of this detachment in everyday life in order to share the results of our personal inquiries with other people.

> I must neglect my own peculiar ends enough to take some account of my neighbor if I am going to be intelligible to him ... Science systematizes and indefinitely extends this principle ... [to] any possible neighbor in the wide stretches of time and space. And it does so by the mere fact that it is continually reshaping its peculiar objects with an eye single to availability in inference.[28]

THE IMPORTANCE OF INFERENCE

To appreciate what makes it seem so obvious to Dewey that science is a specialized mode of practice, one has to note the prominence given to *inference* in the section of the article that Dewey titled

"Science as a Practical Art," on which the preceding discussion has drawn. Of course "[t]o say that something is to be learned, is to be found out, is to be ascertained or proved or believed, is to say that something is to be done."[29] But attaining knowledge is a process of making inference "more fertile and more safe than it would otherwise be."[30] Dewey wanted to insist that in this process the traits of things are "worked over for use in inference, [just] as the traits of manufactured articles are qualities of crude materials modified for specific purposes."[31] If a thing acquires powers and liabilities when it comes to have a different role in our habits of action and response, then we can accept that things change when we acquire knowledge of them. But accepting that this is a useful way to speak or think about the development of knowledge is not required in order to understand the central role Dewey assigns to inference.

Inferring is, like breathing and walking, something we do naturally without necessarily intending to do it. That we do it is as obvious a fact as the "existence of eyes or ears or the growth of plants" and as important as it is conspicuous. "Every act of human life, not springing from instinct or mechanical habit, contains it; most habits are dependent upon some amount of it for their formation, as they are dependent upon it for their re-adaptation to novel circumstances."[32] The function of inference is to allow an agent to respond to what is absent as though it were a "stimulating force of the given situation."[33] "All inference is a *going beyond* the assuredly present to an absent."[34] That our inferences sometimes fail or are mistaken has – as have failures in many other practices important to our lives – prompted us to transform our spontaneous performance into deliberate technique, in this case to invent and perfect "an art of inquiry: a system of checks and tests to be used before the conclusion of inference is categorically affirmed."[35] "Controlled inference is science."[36]

It would be in Dewey's view a dangerous illusion to think that the practice of inference could be improved by taking the axiomatic method as a model. To be sure we would not make an unsound inference, if we proceeded always by making formally valid deductive inferences from indubitably correct first principles, but the problem is to find first principles in experience. Empiricism, especially that in vogue during the latter half of Dewey's life, looked for those first principles in "a kind of *knowledge* or simple

apprehension (or sense acquaintance) implying no inference and yet basic to inference."[37] But the project, which extended from Locke to Russell and the logical empiricists, of identifying empirical foundations was, Dewey insisted, based on confusion. Either it begins with genuine immediate experience, which is as likely as not to be a "nest of obscurities and ambiguities," "so variegated and complex"[38] as to be worthless for careful inference; or it turns out on closer examination to be a refined product of experimental practice, far too laden with inference to count as a first principle for the foundationalist enterprise.

If a scientific inference did actually turn on something's being red, we would not rely on the presence of something that seemed red (the poster-child of sense-data theories). We would "move the head," "shade the eyes," "turn the thing over," "take it to a different light. The use of lens, prism, or whatever device, is simply carrying farther the use of like methods."[39] The perception of "a single, thoroughly defined shade, a tint and hue of red ... is the last refinement of observation."[40] We never have just a given of that sort in experience; we analyze the complex situation that is given and select "what is data for inference and what is irrelevant."[41] To treat this product of our deliberate activity "as something naturally or psychologically given is a monstrous superstition."[42]

As Dewey sees it, the foundationalist project turns on a theoretical sleight of hand, passing off the end-products of previous inquiries for the unrefined experience on which an empiricist "logical construction" pretends to be built. Dewey saw no point in the logical project – even if purged of this confusion between experimentally refined product and psychological primitive – of justifying beliefs or propositions with the aim of establishing their certainty. The primitive for the purposes of knowledge was not in Dewey's view the presence of something (a quale) to consciousness. There are indeed such qualities present to every mode of consciousness, but their presence does not constitute knowledge (of them), nor constitute the episode of consciousness (of them) as cognition. Only when used as a sign of something, does the presence of a quality constitute knowledge and the awareness of it constitute cognition. The primitive for the purposes of knowledge is found in the activity of connecting something "had" in immediate experience to something else.

NORMATIVE SCIENCE OR A NATURAL HISTORY OF THOUGHT?

When the founder of pragmatism, Charles Peirce, encountered the same early expressions of Dewey's version of pragmatism, which James had greeted enthusiastically as evidence of "a flourishing school of radical empiricism," Peirce's reaction was less positive. It seemed to him that Dewey proposed, "to substitute for the Normative Science which in my judgment is the greatest need of our age a 'Natural History' of thought or of experience."[43] It is true that Dewey continued throughout his life to frame his philosophy with a genetic account of the development of our habitual responses. The account begins with how our unreflective habits of drawing inferences arise from our everyday interactions with the environment, moves on to how, through a process Dewey labeled "inquiry," we employ the techniques of reflection to modify our responses to cope with situations that perplex or frustrate us, and from there to how we might, as an aid to overcoming the uneven success we have at this second stage, develop general methods and principles to improve the effectiveness of the effort to take control of our habits. These methods, the products of an inquiry into inquiry, would amount to a theory of inquiry or a "logic," as Dewey preferred to use the word.

A developmental schema of this kind taken on its own does amount to little more than idealized natural history, but unless one believes that the distinction between fact and value constitutes an unbridgeable moat around every descriptive enterprise, the possibility of deriving norms from a genetic account should present no problem. A careful description (including often the history) of what one has evaluated should be part of the basis of any set of recommendations. The description of a practice cannot overlook the goal of the practice, and components of a practice are appropriately evaluated in terms of its goal. As recommendations are nothing if not normative, and "[c]ontrolled inference is science," so as long as the inferences that lead to our recommendations are controlled, we have engaged in normative science.[44]

This response might well not satisfy Peirce, if he was disturbed by what has continued to be a source of discomfort with Dewey's approach – its implication that even the principles of logic rest on experience and may need to be revised in light of it. A common

response to any approach with this implication is to ask what conceivable experience would force us to give up the principle of modus ponens? Given the centrality of this pattern of inference to the concept of a conditional statement, and the convenience with which the conditional form allows inferences to be expressed in single sentences, this challenge is by no means easy to answer, but hardly conclusive, as it assumes the formal principles of our reasoning practices confront our experience individually rather than as integral parts of broadly structured practices. On the other hand, the idea that the broad features of the development of modern logic were not in important ways influenced by the growth of empirical science can hardly be sustained. What inspired Peirce and other logicians of his generation to work to develop a logic of relations, and the revolution in the formal treatment of reasoning that occurred as a result, was the inability of traditional logic to account for important inferences involving relations that were regularly used in the mathematics of change.

Dewey eventually carried out the project he had long harbored of accounting for the basic forms of reasoning from a study of inquiry,[45] but in a way that totally abstracted from the use of mathematical forms in empirical inquiry. These forms by his own account had become indispensable instruments in our inquiries into, and scientifically based dealings with, the natural world. To make a convincing case that even forms of reasoning answer to experience, one needs to recognize how we make inferences on the basis of our grasp of such forms. One needs to begin with what Peirce, an experienced laboratory practitioner, would have readily acknowledged: that the inferences about natural phenomena that we make commonly rely on computations that are guided by mathematical expressions (referred to as "experimental laws") of the relationships between measurable aspects of the phenomena.

Experiment has established well-known and relatively unsophisticated laws such as Hooke's law, used in the determination of the tensile strength of a material, or D'Arcy's law for rate of flow of water under pressure through a porous medium. Consider the second of these, which can be expressed by the formula $Q = (K \cdot h \cdot A)/L$, where Q is the volume of water that passes a given point in a unit of time, h is the difference in height between water flowing in and the water flowing out of the aquifer, A is the cross-sectional area of the porous medium, L is the linear distance the water flows through this

medium, and K is a constant known as the hydraulic conductivity of the porous medium. Simple algebra mediates an inference from this "law" to the design of an apparatus for measuring what that "constant" is for a given medium: since $K = (Q \cdot L)/(h \cdot A)$, set up an apparatus with known h, L, and A; measure Q and compute K. Similar reasoning leads to determinations of tensile strength (the constant known as Young's Modulus). We will return shortly to consider more carefully the status of the bases of these inferences.

When approaching a situation in which it is indeterminate what the rate of flow will be through the porous medium with which we are dealing (or it is indeterminate what load the material we are using will bear), we take for granted the applicability of the relevant laws and the relationships that they express between measurable values. The relevant laws are treated (relative to the new problematic situation) as "a priori" – in other words as applicable prior to experience with these particular phenomena. What has to be determined a posteriori (where we need further experience before proceeding) are the values for what the laws lead us to expect to be the constant coefficients for the materials in the particular circumstances.

That we apply the laws in this (relatively) a priori way does not mean they are not "empirical"; our reliance on them rests on prior experience and nothing guarantees that we will not in a new situation have to abandon our reliance and seek more sophisticated laws to represent the relationships that interest us. For example we may not, for reasons we cannot anticipate a priori, be able to treat the coefficients as constants because to resolve what is indeterminate in the situation we face, we need to treat them not as constants but as functions of factors that we hitherto have not taken into account. And the appropriate mathematical representation of the relationships involved in a situation of this type – whether it is linear (as in these examples) or quadratic or exponential, etc. – will have to be discovered experimentally, just as the adequacy for many purposes of the original "linear approximation" was found experimentally by D'Arcy.

THE APPLICATION OF MATHEMATICS TO EXPERIENCE

But to what extent are the mathematical forms we bring to bear on empirical situations like these, and the intermediate inferences (the

calculations and algebraic manipulations) that these forms make possible, the product of experience? Although Dewey's contributions to philosophy have a very wide range, regrettably this range seldom approached the philosophic questions raised by mathematical practice. Dewey was involved at a relatively early stage of his career in research into the development of simple mathematical concepts in children. From remarks made in defense of the methods he and his colleague had adopted and of the conclusions they drew,[46] it is possible to infer that Dewey regarded a child's concept of number as resting on its grasp of counting procedures and the control of its motor activities that this implied. But Dewey never ventured an account of how this develops into a grasp of the abstract relationships involved in arithmetical calculations, let alone the grasp of more sophisticated algebraic manipulations.

It is clear that Dewey would not have embraced the "rationalist" doctrine of innate ideas found in Descartes and criticized by Locke, nor endorsed the justification for the a priori application of basic mathematical concepts that Kant proposed in his "transcendental aesthetic." Dewey would have insisted that what we experience is not, *pace* Kant, organized temporally and spatially because we impose ordinal numbers and the concepts of Euclidean geometry on what is delivered to us through our capacities for being affected, our sensibilities. Our experience acquires its initial spatial features through the coordination of our activities of placing things (including our own bodies) relative to other things, and we come to regard what we experience as having the structure articulated in Euclidean geometry only to the extent that we are prepared to apply more widely the rules governing a special practice that involves using a straight-edge and a pair of compasses. Our experience acquires its initial temporal features through the coordination of our activities into those which come before, after and simultaneously with one another, and we come to regard what we experience as containing numbers of things only to the extent that we are prepared to apply widely the rules governing the practices of making ordered comparisons of pluralities (pluralities of actions as well as physical objects).

What is basic is that our activities can be structured by habit and coordinated through symbolic representations in ways that allow us to learn and follow rules. What Dewey never ventured to explore are the profoundly important questions of how it is possible for us to do

this and do so in ways that we can recognize in one another as correct or incorrect. (It was one of Wittgenstein's achievements to have opened this hitherto unexplored territory.) What is problematic is, if mathematics is the product of human activity, how it is possible for us, having made certain initial decisions about how we will proceed in some matter, to infer a wealth of important and necessary consequences – consequences we are not free to repudiate because, in some objective sense, how we started has bound us to these consequences. Without understanding this possibility, we will not understand how, as Dewey suggests, we can create cognitive instruments for successful use in our interactions with our environment, and yet have this use involve correct and incorrect inferences that are not appropriately assessed as such relative to the success of the empirical applications we make of our cognitive instruments.

One response to this problem is to say that the mathematical structures we use in this way to improve our interactions with the environment are not our own (free) creations, but exist independently of us in some way; and common referral to these independent existences makes possible the recognition of the correctness and otherwise of inferences, calculations, and symbolic manipulations based on these structures. This response reflects a "realist" impulse, a realism not about the independence of the physical world (our natural environment) from how any of us humans may represent it, but a realism about the universal concepts that may or may not govern that world. These concepts, moreover, have an important internal structure, the articulation of which is independent of how any of us humans may infer, calculate or manipulate its representation. This is a realism, in other words, in a medieval sense, about "universals," and given Peirce's identification of his own position as amounting to the realism of the late thirteenth-century philosopher, John Duns Scotus, Dewey's lack of attention to these matters may have been a source of Peirce's dissatisfaction with the direction he saw Dewey taking.

It is not clear, however, that realism offers any satisfactory answers to the questions raised by Wittgenstein about our common understanding of these universals and our ability to agree on the inferences that are underwritten by our grasp of the abstract articulation of pure mathematical forms. Although it is commonly believed, it is not obviously correct, for example, that mathematical proofs are no

more than logically valid deductions from definitions of mathematical concepts. There is a proof procedure known as mathematical induction: if (1) a property is proved to be true of the least member of a well-ordered set and if (2) it can be proved that if the property holds of any member of the set, then it holds for its successor, then (3) the property holds for all members of the set. This is not a principle of deductive logic nor expressible in the (first-order) form of language to which generally agreed logical principles can be applied. Would the independent existence of the positive integers without appeal to a mysterious faculty of rational intuition explain our agreement over the application of the principle of mathematical induction any better than the simple observation that people can be trained to use this proof procedure to the satisfaction of those who are recognized to be competent in its use?

THE QUESTION OF NATURAL NECESSITY

Realism of the kind to which Peirce was partial might be a more effective response to worries about how, by the use of these cognitive instruments, we can successfully represent constraints on what it is possible to experience. If we have an adequate mathematical representation of some natural system, after all, we can calculate on the basis of sufficient measurements that a great many developments in the system, which we might otherwise imagine are possible, are in fact not possible (unless, that is, the system is subjected to some external influence). Indeed it is often possible to identify for a given future time exactly one state of the system as (unless subjected to external influence) the necessary outcome of its current state.

There is a longstanding challenge to empiricism to explain how this can be done on the basis of experience alone. As Kant said, "Appearances do indeed present cases from which a rule can be obtained according to which something usually happens, but they never prove the sequence to be *necessary*";[47] and again, "Experience does indeed show that one appearance customarily follows upon another, but not that this sequence is necessary."[48] Experience of X is taken to show that X is possible, but no lack of experience of X can show that X is impossible (or that it is necessary that not X). Commonly, as Kant suggests, we are interested in connections between what we experience and typically want to be able to infer

that we will experience Z from the appearance of Y (because of a causal connection of some kind between the two) on the basis of experience of Z always following Y. But no experience of conjunctions of Y and Z establish that it is not possible for Z to fail to follow Y.

This was the challenge (originating with David Hume) to which Kant responded by arguing – although in the view of many not successfully – that the necessity of sequences of appearances is a necessary condition of the experience of things as sequential. A realist of Peirce's stamp would hold that the mathematical structures that function, according to Dewey, as useful cognitive instruments, do so because they express or represent in some way the real operative constraints on natural objects. Kant's approach will have no appeal to a thoroughgoing empiricist, for Kant tries to justify the use of certain concepts prior to their being shown by experience to be usable. Is it equally contrary to empiricist principles to adopt Peirce's approach and allow that it is possible to say on the basis of experience of our environment that some developments are not possible, and indeed allow that it is possible in some cases to identify one outcome as necessary?

In posing this question about the kind of empiricism that pragmatism represents, one has to pay careful attention to the implications of the phrase (three paragraphs above) "unless subjected to external influence" and to the possibility, acknowledged in the discussion of experimental laws such as D'Arcy's, that there is never a guarantee that such cognitive instruments will work in all new situations that appear, at least at face value, similar to situations in which such instruments have previously served us well. Pragmatic empiricism does not seek certainty; it embraces fallibilism, because it recognizes the limits of experience – both past (and the effect this may have on the generality of the laws we have framed) and present (and the effect this may have on our recognition of potentially relevant factors). The question is whether, when allowances have been made for the limits of our experience, we will need to apply the concept of necessity (that is of "not possibly not") and whether we need to assume this concept has an objective basis in structures that constrain the behavior of the natural world.

In an early piece,[49] which scholars[50] have recognized to be an important indicator of the direction his thought would take, Dewey explored the concept of necessity. He acknowledged[51] the influence

of a piece that Peirce had recently published,[52] challenging the principle (which philosophers have long recognized could not be based on experience) that every fact in the universe is precisely determined by law. Dewey's argument took a more radical turn, as his title, "The Superstition of Necessity" suggests. Not surprisingly he looked at the use of the concept of necessity in the context of our practical deliberations and how we are drawn on many occasions to conclude, "*if* I am to reach an end, certain means *must* be used."[53]

His thesis was that the logical consideration of necessity had to be referred to (it "rests upon")[54] the teleological, and, moreover, the use of the concept reflects an incomplete stage in the development of our inquiry. If we are reasoning from ends to means, the "must" reflects "[t]he externality of means to end [that] is merely a symptom of lack of specification or concreteness."[55] In more factually oriented inquiries (governed, to be sure, by a practical objective such as discovering the identity of a murderer), the use of "'must' marks not a greater certainty or actuality than a mere 'is' would indicate, but rather a doubt, a surmise or guess gradually gaining in certainty."[56] The upshot appears to be that the concept of necessity will have evaporated by the time our inquiries have reached a more complete stage. Dewey, in other words, appears to favor an eliminativist strategy for dealing with the longstanding problems that necessity raises for empiricism.

But Dewey's choice of examples overlooks a crucial function of the concept of necessity: the concept of constraint on what is possible. The second example confuses necessity with certainty and the focus on the teleological results in the pretense that the only use for "must" in means–ends reasoning is the sense Aristotle identified as "hypothetical" necessity. "It is therefore necessary for it to be [made] of iron, if we are to have a saw and perform the operation of sawing. What is necessary then, is necessary on a hypothesis."[57] We want a saw to cut wood (the hypothesized end) and the only material out of which to make a toothed implement, the teeth of which will not bend or break, is iron. But, as Aristotle would conceive it, this reasoning rests on iron having one nature and other materials available (gold, silver, copper, bronze) having different natures when it comes to retaining rigidly the shapes we give them. Our reasoning thus appears to reflect the fact that the natural world is constrained to act in some ways and not in others.

The judgment involved in Aristotle's example lacks the more mathematically sophisticated form of Hooke's and D'Arcy's laws, but it raises similar questions. Yes, our assessment of the quality of the material we are about to employ may be defective or unusual in ways we have not noticed. Yes, we may be about to deal with a situation where the general understanding we have built from our previous experience is simply inapplicable. But when all that is acknowledged, how can we avoid regarding the situation, with which we are dealing, as constrained to develop in certain ways and not in others? When the "must" that arises from not having sufficiently specified a sufficiently concrete end[58] has been acknowledged, as well as the "must" that arises from the pressure of reason in the situation where there is still room for doubt,[59] is there still not room for recognizing that there is a practical necessity for using doorways, staircases, and can openers, because the nature of the world leaves certain avenues of action open and leaves others closed?

Hume framed the problem to which Kant responded by insisting that necessary connections between appearances are never presented to us in experience, and the only account Hume could give for the origin of our idea of such connections was a necessity internal to the workings of our minds: an impression of one kind that has been constantly conjoined with another operates on our minds to move them from the one to the other. James suggested – what to him appeared the radical alternative – we accept that the missing connections are, after all, present in experience. Dewey's alternative, more radical still, would be to insist that as parts of nature our minds cannot be constrained in ways that our environment is not, and given that experience for Dewey is just constituted of habits that constrain in this way (although structured in complex ways that give us freedom as "an eventual function") there is no need for him to adopt an eliminativist approach to the concept of natural necessity.

NOTES

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10. J. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice" (1915) *MW* 8:15–23.
11. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 21.
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13. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," pp. 21–22.
14. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical" (1908), *MW* 4:104.
15. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical," pp. 104–105.
16. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical," p. 105.
17. James, *Pragmatism and the Meaning of Truth*, p. 112.
18. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical," p. 109.
19. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical," p. 109.
20. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 32.
21. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," pp. 30–31.
22. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 20.
23. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 65.
24. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," pp. 80–81.
25. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 78.
26. "A system of objects" may be read as "the products or tools of inquiries" on the authority of what Thomas Burke says in *Dewey's New Logic*, p. 56.
27. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 81.
28. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 82.
29. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 65.
30. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 66.
31. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 67.
32. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," pp. 68–69.
33. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 70.
34. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 71. Emphasis in the original.
35. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 72.

36. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 78.
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38. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 73.
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51. Dewey, "The Superstition of Necessity," p. 19n.
52. C. S. Peirce, "The Doctrine of Necessity Examined," in *Collected Papers*, ed. C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss, 8 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), vol. VI, pp. 28–45 (¶¶ 6.35–65).
53. Dewey, "The Superstition of Necessity," p. 30.
54. Dewey, "The Superstition of Necessity," p. 33.
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57. Aristotle, "Physics," in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. I, 200a11–12.
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MARK JOHNSON

6 Cognitive science and Dewey's theory of mind, thought, and language

Over eighty years ago, half a century before the term "cognitive science" had even been coined, John Dewey developed his view of mind, thought, and language in ongoing dialogue with the biological and psychological sciences of his day. He drew on empirical research in a number of fields, including biology, neuroscience, anthropology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, and linguistics. Dewey's approach thus offers a model of how philosophy and the cognitive sciences can productively work together. The sciences reveal aspects of the deepest workings of the mind. Philosophy evaluates the underlying assumptions and methods of the sciences, and it places the empirical research on cognition in its broader human context, in order to determine what it means for our lives.

In a nutshell, Dewey's theory of mind is naturalistic, non-reductive, and process-oriented. His view is *naturalistic* in that it employs empirical research drawn from a number of natural and social sciences. It eschews explanations that rely on supernatural notions, rejecting any idea of a non-empirical ego or pure rationality. However, even though Dewey appropriated modes of inquiry characteristic of the sciences, he took great care to avoid the reductionist tendencies that limit the explanatory scope of certain sciences. His account is thus *non-reductive* because he saw that no single scientific account, cluster of scientific perspectives, or particular philosophical orientation ever tells the whole story. Consequently, he insisted on a plurality of methods from various sciences, he recognized multiple levels of explanation for mental phenomena, and he famously used art and aesthetic experience to reveal the depths of human experience and understanding. His view is *process-oriented* insofar as it always regards experience and thinking as ongoing

processes of organism–environment interaction. He never hypostatizes cognitive functions into discrete faculties and never turns dynamic cognitive processes into fixed structures.

These three defining aspects of Dewey's view are manifested in his insistence that any useful philosophical account of mind, thought, and language must do justice to the depth and richness of human experience. *Experience* is Dewey's most important notion. It is meant to include *everything that happens* – both from the side of the experiencing organism and from the side of the complex environments with which that organic creature is continually interacting. Experience "includes *what* men do and suffer, *what* they strive for, love, believe and endure, and also *how* men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine – in short, processes of *experiencing*."[1]

Dewey argued that we are the inheritors of seriously mistaken views of mind, thought, and language that are the unfortunate result of fragmenting experience into subjective vs. objective elements, passive vs. active processes, and mental vs. physical components. He was especially disturbed by early empiricist views of experience as built up out of passively received atomistic sensations that must somehow then be synthesized into unified experiences.

In stark contrast to such reductive and atomistic accounts, Dewey argues that the basic unit of experience is an integrated dynamic whole that emerges through the coordination of an active organism and its complex environment. Experience thus has aspects of the organism and characteristics of the environment in dynamic relation. It is only within such a multidimensional purposive whole that we mark distinctions and recognize patterns relative to our purposes, interests, and activities as biological and social creatures. In an early important article, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896) Dewey challenged the reigning stimulus-response view of experience, according to which a given perceptual stimulus gives rise to some action (response), either immediately or via some inner mediating mental ideation. Dewey argues that experience does not come to us as discrete stimuli and responses; rather, it comes to us as unities organized relative to our ongoing engagement with our environment. Dewey's point is that:

> the reflex arc idea, as commonly employed, is defective in that it assumes sensory stimulus and motor response as distinct psychical existences, while

in reality they are always inside a co-ordination and have their significance purely from the part played in maintaining or reconstituting the co-ordinations.[2]

Dewey's resistance to any account that trades on rigid dualisms, hypostatized functions, or one-dimensional reductive explanations is thus based on his argument that all such accounts falsify our experience.

A NON-DUALISTIC, FUNCTIONAL VIEW OF MIND

Dewey founds his theory of mind and thought on the assumption that a human being is a living organism, with at least a mostly functioning brain and body, engaged in continuous interaction with various environments, which are at once physical, social, and cultural. Mind has deep biological dimensions, but it is also fundamentally a social phenomenon. The critical challenge for any naturalistic view like Dewey's is to explain mind solely in terms of dimensions of experience, without "the appearance upon the scene of a totally new outside force as a cause of changes that occur."[3] What are known as "higher" cognitive functions (e.g. conceptualizing, reasoning, language use) must be shown to emerge from "lower" (perceptual, motor, and affective) functions, without relying on non-natural entities, causes, or principles.

Dewey's naturalism is thus defined by what he called the *principle of continuity*, according to which, "there is no breach of continuity between operations of inquiry and biological operations and physical operations. 'Continuity' ... means that rational operations *grow out of* organic activities, without being identical with that from which they emerge."[4] In other words, Dewey attempts to explain "mind" and all its operations and activities non-dualistically, as grounded in bodily operations of living human creatures, who are themselves the result of prior evolutionary history and who have typically passed through a crucial sequence of developmental stages that have shaped their cognitive capacities and their identity.

In light of the principle of continuity, the old distinction between non-living things (the physical), living things (the psycho-physical), and creatures capable of thinking (the mental) must be reconfigured

in terms of "levels of increasing complexity and intimacy of interactions among natural events," such that novel cognitive functions emerge at each higher level.[5] The psycho-physical is distinguished from the merely physical by the emergence of sentience and self-movement in an organism. The mental emerges in select species through the development of the ability to conceptualize, reason, and communicate symbolically. Mind is thus embodied:

> Since mind cannot evolve except where there is an organized process in which the fulfilments of the past are conserved and employed, it is not surprising that mind when it evolves should be mindful of the past and future, and that it should use the structures which are biological adaptations of organism and environment as its own and its only organs. In ultimate analysis the mystery that mind should use a body, or that body should have a mind, is like the mystery that a man cultivating plants should use the soil; or that the soil which grows plants at all should grow those adapted to its own physico-chemical properties and relations.[6]

Dewey coined the term "body-mind" to avoid the dualism inherent in speaking of body *and* mind.[7] The terms "body" and "mind" are thus merely convenient abstractions from our primary experience, which is an ongoing process of feeling-saturated awareness and thinking that has physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and cultural dimensions inextricably woven together. He summarizes:

> Body-mind simply designates what actually takes place when a living body is implicated in situations of discourse, communication, and participation. In the hyphenated phrase body-mind, "body" designates the continued and conserved, the registered and cumulative operation of factors continuous with the rest of nature, inanimate as well as animate; while "mind" designates the characters and consequences which are differential, indicative of features which emerge when "body" is engaged in a wider, more complex and interdependent situation.[8]

In other words, we can appropriately speak of mind whenever our engagement with our environment involves capacities for recognizing patterns, marking distinctions, and coordinating behaviors by means of symbolic interactions. Mind is an evolutionary accomplishment that cannot exist without a body in continual interaction with its world. Thus, for Dewey, mind is not an innate capacity or a distinct metaphysical entity or substance. Rather, mind emerges out of the strivings of certain highly developed organisms who have

learned to inquire, communicate, and coordinate their activities through the use of symbols. Mind is the primary vehicle by which creatures like us are able to sustain our existence, pursue our various conceptions of well-being, share meaning, and engage in the distinctive forms of inquiry that mark our species. Dewey attributes mind only to humans, because he thinks that they alone are capable of the complex symbolic interaction and communication that he regarded as necessary for the mental in its fullest sense. However, notwithstanding Dewey's anthropocentrism, most ethologists today would surely grant some form of mind at least to certain higher primates who appear to communicate symbolically and to coordinate their behaviors in acts of problem-solving and social intercourse.

Dewey's non-dualist functional approach is quite compatible with mainstream views in cognitive neuroscience today, according to which *organism* and *environment* are correlative terms, definable only in relation to their continuous interaction. There is no mind without a functioning body and brain, nor a functioning brain without cognitive activity engaging the world. Cognitive neuroscientist Antonio Damasio captures these organism–environment and mind–body couplings in a way that Dewey would embrace:

> (1) The human brain and the rest of the body constitute an indissociable organism, integrated by means of mutually interactive biochemical and neural regulatory circuits (including endocrine, immune, and autonomic neural components); (2) the organism interacts with the environment as an ensemble: the interaction is neither of the body alone nor of the brain alone; (3) The physiological operations that we call mind are derived from the structural and functional ensemble rather than from the brain alone: mental phenomena can be fully understood only in the context of an organism's interacting in an environment.[9]

Given his insistence on the multidimensionality and non-duality of experience, the only thing Dewey might add to this quotation is perhaps that not only are brain and body an indissociable organism, but so also body and environment constitute an indissociable organic whole. In *Experience and Nature* Dewey emphasizes all of this complex interconnectedness in his provocative claim – a claim that would be completely at home in contemporary cognitive neuroscience – that "[t]o see the organism *in* nature, the nervous system in the organism, the brain in the nervous system, the cortex in the

brain is the answer to the problems which haunt philosophy."[10] However, Dewey understandably devoted more attention to the social and cultural dimensions of mind than one might expect from a neuroscientist like Damasio. For Dewey, mind emerges when symbolic interaction and sharing of meanings becomes possible for a group of creatures. Mind represents the horizon of potentially shareable meanings available to certain highly complex organisms, whereas individual consciousness is a particular organism's actual awareness of specific meanings:

> Mind denotes the whole system of meanings as they are embodied in the workings of organic life; consciousness in a being with language denotes awareness or perception of meaning; it is the perception of actual events, whether past, contemporary or future, *in* their meanings, the having of actual ideas ... Mind is contextual and persistent; consciousness is focal and transitive. Mind is, so to speak, structural, substantial; a constant background and foreground; perceptive consciousness is process, a series of heres and nows.[11]

This passage construes mind as an intersubjective network of meaning, and consciousness as an ongoing process by which we can be aware of meanings. However, I do not think it precludes our speaking, in a derivative fashion, of an individual organism (for example, a person) having a "mind." Yet no individual alone could have a mind unless there had been other conspecific social animals to establish a shared system of meaning and to coordinate their behavior via that system. Dewey would say that certain animals develop what we call "mind" only when they acquire a specific set of interacting functional capacities within a communal context in a society.

> As life is a character of events in a peculiar condition of organization, and "feeling" is a quality of life-forms marked by complexly mobile and discriminating responses, so "mind" is an added property assumed by a feeling creature, when it reaches that organized interaction with other living creatures which is language, communication.[12]

To say that I have a "mind" is to say that I am an organism whose potential for very complex interactions has risen to the level where I can communicate meanings with other creatures (who have "minds"), can engage in various modes of inquiry, reasoning, and creativity, and can coordinate activities with others using symbols that have shared meaning for us.

However phenomenologically rich this description of mind might be, it still leaves us with the critical problem of explaining how processes that we call "thinking" can emerge for certain types of animate creatures, yet without any breach of continuity with their basic biological functions.

THOUGHT AS EMBODIED COGNITION

If there is no pure soul or transcendent ego to serve as the locus of thinking, then where does it come from? Once again, Dewey's answer is *experience*. All thinking arises from bodily processes of organism–environment transaction, and it takes whatever value it has from its ability to enrich and transform that experience. In his *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, Dewey famously argues that our views of thinking and logic have been mesmerized and held captive by disembodied, ahistorical, and overly intellectualized theories of cognition. We tend to fixate on certain concepts, logical principles, and methods of thinking as though they constituted eternal, pure, universal structures of an allegedly transcendent reason. This kind of selective abstraction reinforces the illusion of a pure seat of thought in something variously called "mind," "reason," or "pure ego." Our ability to think then becomes an utterly inexplicable mystery, on a par with the alleged mystery of how mind can affect body. On this view, thought and its supposedly universal logical forms appear to be absolute givens that drop down from above into certain species of bodily creatures, as though their embodiment had no role in shaping their conceptualization and reasoning.

In sharp contrast with this disembodied view, Dewey honors his principle of continuity by arguing that thinking is a naturally evolving process of experience that occurs only for certain complex animals, under certain very specific bodily conditions. Thinking operates through the recruitment of sensory-motor and other bodily processes. Following William James and C. S. Peirce, Dewey crafts a non-dualistic, body-based theory of human cognition, a view grounded in the brain science and psychology of his day, but also remarkably consonant with so-called "embodied cognition" views in contemporary cognitive neuroscience, as summarized by Don Tucker:

> Complex psychological functions must be understood to arise from bodily control networks. There is no other source for them. This is an exquisite parsimony of facts.

> There are no brain parts for abstract faculties of the mind – faculties like volition or insight or even conceptualization – that are separate from the brain parts that evolved to mediate between visceral and somatic processes.[13]

Dewey argues that we must stop conceiving of thinking as a disembodied, transcendent activity and instead see it only as one of several very remarkable processes of embodied experience. The experiential prompt for human thinking is our human need for inquiry to help us resolve problematic situations. Indeed, Dewey even suggests that "the word 'thought' ... is a synonym of 'inquiry' and its meaning is determined by what we find out about inquiry."[14] Dewey characterizes the experiential process of inquiry as having three phases. In the first phase, an organism (here, a live human creature) is confronted with an indeterminate, problematic situation that upsets his or her normal habits of interaction. For example, yesterday you were feeling just fine, going about your mundane business of living, with little or no thought, or even consciousness, of what you were doing. Your routine habits carried you unreflectively through your day. However, today you feel nauseous, your joints ache, and you have the chills. Your situation is disrupted, and its entire quality has changed in a distressing way. Your normal habits of living do not suffice to carry experience forward to some happy issue.

This prompts the second phase, in which you begin to wonder what is wrong and how you might fix it. You want to feel better. Inquiry has commenced. You start to discriminate aspects of your experience to see what they mean and how you can transform them for the better. For example, you notice what is most dominantly characteristic of your situation – chills, fever, upset stomach, and headache. You project various hypotheses about what this particular set of symptoms might indicate. That is, you engage in a *thought* process that employs distinctions (concepts) and looks for their implications. You make some preliminary judgments based on your past experience. Could this be the flu? Or maybe food poisoning? Perhaps it is a reaction to the new antibiotic you just started taking for a chronic infection? You consult with others. You make judgments about what to expect if one hypothesis or another is the correct one. In short, you inquire. You speculate on how you might cure yourself.

Already, and this is a third stage, you are beginning to take action (by thinking and inquiring) to try to change the quality of your

experience for what you perceive to be the better. Thinking itself is action, for it transforms experience as it develops. Successful thinking is thus part of an arc of experience that starts with your problematic situation and eventually, if thought is effective, returns to transform your situation. As such, thinking is value-laden and purposive, insofar as it is directed toward resolving some problem, reestablishing a flow of experience, or discovering new ways of organizing experience that lead to growth and enhanced meaning.

Because Dewey rejects mind/body dualism, he regards the activity of thinking as just as much a matter of habits as any other form of human bodily activity. Just as when a potter employs motor skills to mould clay by means of the manual eye–hand habits she has painstakingly developed, so also the ways we think are the present result of developed and still-developing habits for working through experience. Dewey boldly affirms that "ideas, thoughts of ends, are not spontaneously generated. There is no immaculate conception of meanings or purposes. Reason pure of all influence from prior habit is a fiction."[15] The character of our thought is thus the present result of the quality of the intellectual habits we have acquired. Those habits are realized in our bodies and brains, in relation to our surroundings. They are not lodged in some mental substance or transcendent, disembodied ego.

Contemporary neuroscience would no doubt translate Dewey's talk of habits of thought into the language of neural connectivity and synaptic weights. Having an "idea" or "concept" is correlated with specific patterns of neural activation in the brain (in response to interaction with one's environment), all of which have affective dimensions. An "inference" is construed as our tendency to move from one set of neural activations to another set, as a result of weighted connections between those neural assemblies. Neither in Dewey's account nor in recent cognitive science is there any notion of a disembodied process, carried out in some inner theater of consciousness, in which an allegedly non-material mind or ego inspects and manipulates disembodied ideas. The ways we think are just as much bodily habits as the ways we walk, sing, or throw a ball. Consequently, Dewey's account of thinking situates thought not in "the mind," but in the world, as an ongoing process of habitual ways of engaging experience, and sometimes of reshaping it.

The previous example of trying to figure out why you feel ill is but one instance of human thinking, but it represents in its structure the

most salient aspects of all thinking – from mundane practical problem-solving to scientific or mathematical or logical theorizing to moral reflection, political deliberation, or artistic creativity. All thinking begins within an integrated, embodied, felt situation. Dewey notoriously claims that the start of every thought is a felt experience of a pervasive unifying quality of the entire situation that you inhabit at a given moment. Thought arises out of this qualitative experience, as we begin to discriminate objects, notice their properties, and trace out relations and connections between them. The ways we notice patterns and discriminate objects will be the result of the habits of perception, thought, and action that we have acquired through our previous experience, given our bodily and neural makeup.

Dewey's idea of a pervasive unifying quality is the key to his view of thinking, but it is perhaps the most problematic and neglected part of his theory. What makes Dewey's idea seem so strange to us today is our engrained habit of conceiving the world as populated by discrete objects that possess discrete properties, toward which we direct our thinking. Dewey does not deny that we experience objects, but he insists that beneath and before any experience of objects and qualities there is always one's encounter with the whole situation, which is uniquely characterized by its pervasive distinguishing quality. In *Art As Experience*, Dewey explains this key idea:

> An experience has a unity that gives it its name, *that* meal, that storm, that rupture of a friendship. The existence of this unity is constituted by a single *quality* that pervades the entire experience in spite of the variation of its constituent parts. This unity is neither emotional, practical, nor intellectual, for these terms name distinctions that reflection can make within it.[16]

Imagine that you have just entered a colleague's office. There is an all-encompassing way it feels to be in that place, and the unifying quality of that place is clearly different from your own office. Your experience is a blend of perceptual, emotional, practical, and conceptual dimensions intertwined in *that* particular place. Granted, as soon as you enter the office, you have already begun to recognize objects, mark patterns, and focus on various parts of the entire setting, but Dewey argues that all of this discriminating activity takes place within a unified experienced background out of which objects, people, and events emerge.

Dewey often turned to art as a way of explaining the primacy of this unifying quality that defines a given situation. Consider the experience of walking into a large room of an art museum and having your attention fall immediately on a large painting on the opposite wall. Although you may have never seen this particular painting before, you can discern that it is a Picasso. Nobody will mistake that pervasive quality by which you identified the Picasso for what you encounter in the next room in a Matisse papercut or in a sunset by Emil Nolde. We cannot describe that unifying quality, because in attempting to do so we begin to identify particular lines, colors, shapes, and qualities that are already abstractions from the organic reality of the work. All thought, says Dewey, emerges within some such global grasp of a situation. It is just that we are so busy marking distinctions that we are seldom aware that our first encounter – our primary experience, as it were – was fundamentally qualitative and felt.

In line with contemporary neuroscience today, Dewey argues that what we experience as objects are actually selections of elements out of the ongoing flow of our experience, which is saturated with feeling, meaning, and interest. Dewey explains that an "object" is:

> some element in the complex whole that is defined in abstraction from the whole of which it is a distinction. The special point made is that the selective determination and relation of objects in thought is controlled by reference to a situation – to that which is constituted by a pervasive and internally integrating quality.[17]

The qualitative situation is primary and objects emerge within it, relative to perceiving, acting agents who have values and purposes. In other words, we do not start with properties or objects and then combine them into experiences; rather, we start with integrated scenes within which we then discriminate objects, discern properties, and explore relations. Objects and their qualities – along with our ability to think about them – emerge for us via our ability to orient ourselves within particular situations, given our perceptual and motor capacities, our past experience, our interests, and our values.

It is no accident that Dewey prefers to cite artworks as exemplary of pervasive qualities, for Dewey believed that in art we find human meaning-making in its most intensified and eminent form. Not surprisingly, he held that thinking in art is just as rigorous as thinking in any other discipline, such as science, mathematics, or philosophy.

Most people will readily acknowledge that artworks are characterized by unifying qualities, but they fail to recognize that this is true for *all* types of experience, including *all* types of thinking. In Dewey's words: "All thought in every subject begins with just such an unanalyzed whole. When the subject-matter is reasonably familiar, relevant distinctions speedily offer themselves, and sheer qualitativeness may not remain long enough to be readily recalled."[18]

There is empirical evidence from brain science suggesting that Dewey was correctly describing the process of a developing thought, which moves from the felt pervasive quality to higher-level conceptual discrimination and inference. Tucker describes the core–shell architecture of the brain (in addition to the front–back and right–left structures) that is principally responsible for our global grasp of any situation.[19] To vastly oversimplify, our brain developed through evolution by adding new structures and layers on top of more primitive parts shared with some of our animal ancestors. The present-day result is a brain with core limbic structures (mostly responsible for body-monitoring, motivation, emotions, and feelings) that are connected to the shell of "higher" neocortical layers that have more differentiated functions, such as perception, body movement, action planning, and reasoning. One striking feature of this core–shell organization is that structures in the core regions are massively interconnected and involve limbic processes responsible for emotions and feelings, whereas structures in the shell are more sparsely interconnected and are less directly tied to affect centers. An important consequence of this neural architecture is that there is more functional differentiation and more modularity of brain areas in the cortical shell than in the limbic core. Tucker summarizes:

> First, *connections stay at their own level*. With the exception of "adjacent" connections (paralimbic connects to higher-order association, higher association connects to primary association, etc.), connections from one level go primarily to other brain areas of that same level ...
>
> Second, *the greatest density of connectivity within a level is found at the limbic core*. There is then a progressive decrease in connectivity as you go out toward the primary sensory and motor modules ... In fact, the primary sensory and motor cortices can be accurately described as "modules" because each is an isolated island, connected with the diencephalic thalamus but with no other cortical areas except the adjacent unimodal association cortex of that sensory modality or motor area.

The exception is that the primary motor cortex does have point-to-point connections with the primary somatosensory cortex.[20]

The structures and functions Tucker is describing here would make sense of Dewey's claim that our experience always begins with a pervasive unifying quality of a whole situation, within which we then discriminate objects, with their properties and relations to one another. The limbic core, with its dense interconnections and emotional valences, would present us with a holistic, feeling-rich, emotionally nuanced grasp of a situation. The more modular and highly differentiated sensory and motor regions of the shell (cortical) structure would permit the discrimination and differentiation that we call conceptualization. Tucker explains: "The meaning, or semantic function, of a network may be allowed greater complexity as its architecture becomes more differentiated."[21] In Dewey's terms, the meaning of a situation grows as we mark more differences, similarities, changes, and relations: that is, as we are able to make finer discriminations within the ongoing flow of experience.

Cognitive processing does not occur merely in a linear direction from core to shell structures, however. There are "reentrant connections," so that what occurs at "higher" or more differentiated levels can influence what happens in the limbic areas, which then affect shell regions, in a never-ending dance of self-modulating experience.[22] But the core-to-shell movement of cognition helps explain why and how there can be pervasive felt qualities which then issue in acts of differentiation and conceptualization. Tucker summarizes the structural basis for this growing arc of experience that Dewey described as the movement from a holistic pervasive qualitative situation to conceptual meaning:

At the core must be the most integrative concepts, formed through the fusion of many elements through the dense web of interconnection. This fusion of highly processed sensory and motor information ... together with direct motivational influences from the hypothalamus, would create a *syncretic* form of experience. Meaning is rich, deep, with elements fused in a holistic matrix of information, a matrix charged with visceral significance. Emanating outward – from this core neuropsychological lattice – are the progressive articulations of neocortical networks. Finally, at the shell, we find the most differentiated networks ... [which] are the most constrained by the sensory data, forming close matches with the environmental information that is in turn mirrored by the sense receptors.[23]

Conceptual meaning arises from our visceral, purposive engagement with our world. As Gallese and Lakoff show, our ability to formulate and reason with both concrete and abstract concepts recruits structures of sensory-motor processing and operates within an emotionally charged motivational framework that evolved to help us function successfully within our complex environments.[24]

LANGUAGE AND EMBODIED MEANING

Dewey's notion of *meaning* is notoriously obscure, but throughout all of the many definitions of the term in various parts of his writings, certain characteristic elements stand out. A word or symbol has meaning to the extent that, within a certain community of people, that symbol points beyond itself to past, present, or future possible experiences that can be had: "Meanings are rules for using and interpreting things; interpretation being always an imputation of potentiality for some consequence."[25] Dewey anticipates the deepest insights of what later came to be known as speech-act theory when he insists that speaking a language is a matter of coordinated social action: "The heart of language is not 'expression' of something antecedent, much less expression of antecedent thought. It is communication; the establishment of cooperation in an activity in which there are partners, and in which the activity of each is modified and regulated by partnership."[26] We use symbols that have acquired meaning through "conjoint community of functional use" to inform, question, beg, help, plan, joke, flirt, and a host of other forms of human interaction.[27]

Dewey also anticipates some of the most significant empirical findings of recent cognitive science research on the bodily grounding of meaning. We have seen that in Dewey's theory of mind and thought, there is no place for ideas as quasi-entities floating around in some disembodied mental space, subject to manipulation by an allegedly pure ego. On the contrary, meaning has to come from experience, and experience is at once irreducibly bodily, biological, and cultural. From an evolutionary and developmental perspective, our higher cognitive functions, including language use and abstract thinking, appropriate structures of our bodily, biological engagements with our environment. Dewey observes that:

> Just as when men start to talk they must use sounds and gestures antecedent to speech ... so when men begin to observe and think they must use the

nervous system and other organic structures which existed independently and antecedently. That the use reshapes the prior materials so as to adapt them more efficiently and freely to the uses to which they are put ... is an expression of the common fact that anything changes according to the interacting field it enters ... In a similar fashion, unless "mind" was, in its existential occurrence, an organization *of* physiological or vital affairs and unless its functions develop out of the patterns of organic behavior, it would have no pertinency to nature.[28]

What Dewey hinted at some eighty years ago has today become a commonplace in cognitive neuroscience. What are known as "higher" cognitive functions, such as abstract conceptualization and reasoning, appropriate the embodied meaning and the cognitive structures and operations (e.g. making inferences) of our sensory-motor processes:

> The brain evolved to regulate the motivational control of actions, carried out by the motor system, guided by sensory evaluation of ongoing environmental events. There are no "faculties" – of memory, conscious perception, or music appreciation – that float in the mental ether, separate from the bodily functions. If we accept that the mind comes from the brain, then our behavior and experience must be understood to be elaborations of primordial systems for perceiving, evaluating, and acting. When we study the brain to look for the networks controlling cognition, we find that all of the networks that have been implicated in cognition are linked in one way or the other to sensory systems, to motor systems, or to motivational systems.
>
> There are no brain parts for disembodied cognition.[29]

Tucker's claim that "the mind comes from the brain," does not reduce the mind to the brain. It only claims that mental operations must be correlated with various processes in the brain and central nervous system, including all of the bodily centers responsible for perception, motivation, feeling, emotion, and action. Moreover, the neural processes that underlie our cognitive functions occur only through bodily interaction with our environments – environments with tightly interwoven physical, social, and cultural dimensions.

In Dewey's theory of mind language permits us to mark distinctions and to stabilize the meaning that makes mind and abstract thought possible. This view requires the broadest conception of *language*, as involving all forms of symbolic human interaction, and not just words alone: "language is taken in its widest sense, a sense wider than oral and written speech. It includes the latter. But it includes

also not only gesture but rites, ceremonies, monuments and the products of industrial and fine arts."[30] The possession of language allows humans to mark crucial distinctions in their experience, to refer to past and future things and events (things that are not now present to us), and especially to formulate abstractions as means of solving problems and coordinating actions. A natural language, for Dewey, would thus be a repository of symbols for all of the distinctions and demarcations of aspects of experience that a culture has found it significant to identify and remember over its long history.

The acquisition of language is such a monumental achievement, according to Dewey, because it makes possible our use of objects and events as *signs*, which can have symbolic and representational value. Felt qualities of a situation have a certain unreflective meaning to us (insofar as they point toward other past, present, or future possible experiences), but language permits us to become reflectively aware of meaning and to organize our experience in terms of that meaning:

> Where communication exists, things in acquiring meaning, thereby acquire representatives, surrogates, signs and implicates, which are infinitely more amenable to management, more permanent and more accommodating, than events in their first estate.
>
> By this fashion, qualitative immediacies cease to be dumbly rapturous ... They become capable of survey, contemplation, and ideal or logical elaboration; when something can be said of qualities they are purveyors of instruction.[31]

In light of Dewey's principle of continuity, then, the central problem for a naturalistic theory of language is to explain the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of natural languages and symbol systems, but without employing any notion of disembodied mind, conceptualization, or reasoning. Dewey does no more than sketch the broad outlines of such a theory. Key to his view is the idea that meanings of abstract terms must somehow be based on sensory-motor processes of cognition. Structures of perception and action must be appropriated for higher-level cognition and abstract thinking.

Over the past three decades, a new field – known as cognitive linguistics – has developed, which attempts to explain the phenomena of natural languages as products of cognitive mechanisms that have their origins in perception, object manipulation, and bodily motion. Although not directly influenced by Dewey, cognitive

linguistics is based on the assumption that our most impressive feats of abstract conceptualization and reasoning operate through the recruitment of more garden-variety cognitive processes in sensory-motor parts of the brain. The basic form of explanation is that meaning is grounded in our sensory-motor experience and that these embodied meanings are then extended, via imaginative mechanisms such as images, schemas, conceptual metaphor, metonymy, radial categories, and various forms of conceptual blending, to shape abstract thinking. For example, the conceptual metaphor "knowing is seeing" is widespread across cultures because it is based on the experiential correlation (and neural co-activation) of visual experience with gaining knowledge of a situation.

Joseph Grady has hypothesized that any normally functioning human being will acquire hundreds of basic, shared "primary" metaphors of this sort, simply because we have the bodies we do and interact with recurrent regular features of our environment.[32] For instance, hundreds of times each day we typically interact with containers (boxes, cups, rooms, our bodies, vehicles) and thereby automatically acquire the spatial logic of containers. If my keys are in my hand, my hand is in my pocket, my pocket is in my pants, and my pants are in my office, then my keys are in my office. This is a corporeal logic that I acquire without conscious reflection, just by interacting repeatedly with my environment (an environment populated by many types of containers that stand in various relations). This "container" logic can then be recruited, via the cross-domain mapping of a primary metaphor (here, the metaphor is "categories are containers"), to structure our understanding of abstract conceptual "containment." Once categories (or concepts) are understood as metaphorical containers, then the logic of physical containment (e.g. if container A is in container B, and container B is within container C, then container A is in container C) carries over to relations of abstract concepts (e.g. all A are B; all B are C; therefore, all A are C).

Primary metaphors can be blended and extended to create more elaborate conceptual metaphors for all of our abstract concepts, such as causation, will, justice, mind, knowledge, and love. Lakoff and Johnson have argued that entire philosophies and scientific theories are based on elaborate developments of systematic conceptual metaphors that are shared by members of a particular culture.[33] Our most important abstract concepts, which are absolutely crucial for our

reflective thinking, are typically defined by multiple inconsistent metaphors, each of which has some source domain tied to concrete bodily experiences.

Although Dewey does not offer an explicit account of conceptual metaphor as lying in the heart of human thought and language, there are places where he appears to have glimpsed just such imaginative processes as crucial to abstract thought.

> Every thought and meaning has its substratum in some organic act of absorption or elimination of seeking, or turning away from, of destroying or caring for, of signaling or responding. It roots in some definite act of biological behavior; our physical names for mental acts like seeing, grasping, searching, affirming, acquiescing, spurning, comprehending, affection, emotion are not just "metaphors."[34]

Were Dewey alive today, he would no doubt take an interest in the large number of cross-cultural analyses of body-based metaphors by which we frame our conceptions of mind, mental operations, and knowledge. Like Nietzsche, Dewey seems to have understood that culturally shared conceptual metaphors, of which we are hardly ever conscious, constitute the deepest habits of our conceptualization and reasoning. As a result, our scientific theories and philosophies are vast systematic developments of underlying metaphors. Such metaphors are not errors or falsifications of a pre-given reality, but are instead the very means by which we can recruit the corporeal logic of our bodies for the purpose of abstract reasoning. Formal logic and mathematics – the allegedly most pure and universal forms of thought – are actually based on metaphoric elaborations of patterns of inquiry that employ the experiential logic of our sensory-motor experience. Lakoff and Nunez, for example, have shown how the spatial logic of physical containers underlies Boolean algebra, and they have extended this form of metaphor analysis into aspects of higher mathematics.[35]

Because he recognized the metaphorical character of our abstract concepts, Dewey was highly critical of our human tendency to hypostatize concepts and meanings, as though they were eternal, fixed, disembodied essences. Dewey cites the example of Platonism in mathematics, where patterns found to be useful for inquiry are elevated to the mysterious status of absolute entities and relations:

> Consider the interpretations that have been based upon such essences as four, plus, the square root of minus one. These are at once so manipulable and so

fertile in consequences when conjoined with others that thinkers who are primarily interested in their performances treat them not as significant terms of discourse, but as an order of entities independent of human invention and use.[36]

Our mostly unreflective postulating of abstract entities, coupled with our desire for fixity and certainty in the face of our finite, contingent existence, leads us to hypostatize meanings, concepts, and thought processes as though they were eternal, disembodied, and pure of carnal entanglements. Dewey sought to remind us of the bodily roots of meaning, thought, and language, for he saw that only in this way could we explain where meaning comes from and how language can be about our world.

Language is thus a complex, systematic mode of interaction among certain types of creatures, by means of which they use symbols to coordinate their actions, establish relationships, and understand and transform their world. Dewey cannot clearly separate out mind, thought, and language, because mind signifies a reservoir of shared meaning and communication, meaning in its eminent sense requires language, language permits symbolization and abstraction, and thought is a process of inquiry that uses symbols that have meaning for the inquirers.

DEWEY'S NATURALISM AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE

Dewey's naturalism represents his attempt to avoid what he considered the most catastrophic errors of Western philosophy – errors caused by the model of mind as a disembodied theater of consciousness in which abstract entities (ideas) are examined and manipulated (by a pure ego) according to absolute logical rules to secure epistemic certainty and unchanging truth. What is missing in this model is the inescapable temporal and bodily character of all experience and thought. Thinking, for Dewey, is a *process* that emerges from our bodily engagement with our surroundings. Dewey learned from the dominant behaviorist psychology of his day to emphasize the importance of action and the transformation of the world, rather than internal "mental" states and operations. At the same time, however, he is no mere behaviorist, because he appreciates the critical role of

the felt unifying qualities of situations and the role of feelings and emotions in meaning and thought.

It is such tendencies in Dewey's thinking that align him with so much cognitive science in the twenty-first century. The relevant cognitive science is not the disembodied sort popular during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, which grew out of computer science, artificial intelligence, and analytic philosophy of mind and language. Indeed, Dewey's non-dualistic, non-reductive, and process-oriented account of cognition provides a critique of disembodied, functionalist views that characterize the first-generation orientation. Dewey would have been much more at home with "second-generation" (embodied) cognitive science, which requires a radical rethinking of some of our most enduring conceptions about human thinking and communication.[37] Virtually every key term (e.g. reason, mind, self, meaning, thought, logic, knowledge, will, value) has to be re-conceived from the perspective of embodied cognition. There can be no assumption of disembodied entities, capacities, or processes. Concepts are not quasi-entities but rather "takings" from the flow of experience – a flow that is not merely mental or merely physical but both at once. There can be no single unified center of consciousness that controls perceiving, thinking, and willing. Neuroscience reveals no such center, but instead finds massive parallel processes loosely coordinated within a certain temporal window that is felt by us as a moment of experience.[38]

In short, pragmatism's greatest contribution to cognitive science is to construct the appropriate general philosophical context for understanding the empirical results about mind, consciousness, meaning, thought, and values. Second, pragmatism can identify and criticize limiting or mistaken methodological assumptions that define the various sciences of mind. Finally, beyond sketching the broadest possible framework for studying mind and language, pragmatism can show us how to interpret the relevant implications of cognitive science for our everyday lives.

For example, were Dewey alive today, one can imagine him challenging reductionist tendencies in scientific explanations wherever he might discern them. The complexity of brain functioning understandably leads some researchers to isolate functions and then look for neural correlates for them. However unavoidable such decontextualizing moves might be in actual research, Dewey would have

rightly insisted on always remembering that mind, thought, and language are grandly multidimensional, requiring not just a functioning brain, but also a functioning body to serve it, which in turn is continually interacting with complex environments that have physical, social, and cultural dimensions. Fortunately, reductionism need not be an intrinsic part of any of the cognitive sciences, which can recognize multiple irreducible levels of explanation. This is why Dewey's theory of mind, thought, and language can be seen as loosely compatible with contemporary cognitive science of the embodied mind. However, because we are just beginning to glimpse what the discoveries of the cognitive sciences mean for our lives, pragmatism's work has only begun.

NOTES

1. J. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1925), *LW* 1:18; emphasis in the original.
2. J. Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), *EW* 5:99.
3. J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry (1938)*, *LW* 12:31.
4. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, p. 26; emphasis in the original.
5. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 200.
6. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 211.
7. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 217.
8. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 217.
9. A. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1994), p. xvii.
10. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 224; emphasis in the original.
11. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 230; emphasis in the original.
12. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 198.
13. D. Tucker, *Mind from Body: Experience from Neural Structure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 202.
14. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 29.
15. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1922), *MW* 14:25.
16. J. Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934), *LW* 10:44; emphasis in the original.
17. J. Dewey, "Qualitative Thought" (1930), *LW* 5:246.
18. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 249.
19. The following description of a possible neural basis for the experience of a pervasive quality is taken, with minor revisions, from my book, M. Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), chapter 4.

20. Tucker, *Mind from Body*, pp. 80–81; emphasis in the original.
21. Tucker, *Mind from Body*, p. 97.
22. G. Edelman and G. Tononi. *A Universe of Consciousness: How Matter Becomes Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
23. Tucker, *Mind from Body*, p. 169.
24. V. Gallese and G. Lakoff, "The Brain's Concepts: The Role of the Sensory-Motor System in Conceptual Knowledge," *Cognitive Neuropsychology* 21 (2005), 455–479.
25. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 147.
26. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 141.
27. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 52.
28. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, pp. 217–218; emphasis in the original.
29. Tucker, *Mind from Body*, p. 58.
30. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 51.
31. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, pp. 132–133.
32. J. Grady, "Theories are Buildings Revisited," *Cognitive Linguistics* 8 (1997), 267–290.
33. G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
34. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 221.
35. G. Lakoff and R. Nunez, *Where Mathematics Comes from: How the Embodied Mind Brings Mathematics into Being* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
36. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 153.
37. Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*.
38. See Edelman and Tononi, *A Universe of Consciousness* and A. Damasio, *The Feeling of what Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1999).

MATTHIAS JUNG

7 John Dewey and action

ACTION THEORY IN SOCIAL THEORY, PHILOSOPHY, AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE

The concept of "action" is a key term in the humanities, the social sciences, and beyond. It has played a prominent role in sociology ever since it was established as an academic discipline in the late nineteenth century. In philosophy, it has always been linked with questions of practical rationality, and reemerged as a central topic of analytic philosophy in the second half of the twentieth century, pioneered in the work of Donald Davidson and others. More recently, new developments in cognitive science have attracted attention to hitherto neglected dimensions of the concept and its empirical foundations.

As to sociology, Max Weber's famous *Economy and Society* opens with an enormously influential fourfold schema of types of social action, arranged according to their degree of rationality. Talcott Parsons' *The Structure of Social Action* synthesized the theoretical achievements of the "founding fathers," using an action-theoretical framework and emphasizing the function of normative orientations for the social coordination of individual acts. It is easy to name more prominent sociologists standing for the importance of action theory in the discipline, among them Dewey's friend George Herbert Mead whose approach to action arguably offers the most radical alternative to methodological individualism. More recently Jürgen Habermas and Anthony Giddens have based their approaches on theories of action that follow the sociological tradition, but rely heavily on conceptual developments in other disciplines such as psychology and philosophy.

Another prominent example of the importance of implicit or explicit concepts of action is the discipline of economics, which has been influenced deeply by utilitarian approaches claiming that actors' decisions can be understood from their motivation to optimize their utility. Whether this optimizing assumption should be seen as an empirical description of action or as a recommendation as to how actors *should* act is a much debated issue but, apart from some prominent critics,[1] it remains uncontroversial that economic processes can and should be analyzed on the basis of a strategic notion of action as developed, for example, in game theory. In philosophy too, game- and decision-theoretical models have exerted an immense influence on conceptualizing rational agency. Other key issues are the ontology of action and the complex relationships between action, intentionality, and causality. In the standard framework, intentions are conceptualized as propositional attitudes. The rationality of action is dependent upon processes of deliberation striving for the best among the given alternatives and much emphasis is put on the fact that the action is caused by the relevant intentions and not via so-called "deviant" causal chains. That action is based on some sort of epistemic, prefixed, and performance-independent rationality is often taken for granted by neo-Aristotelian, neo-Humean and Kantian approaches alike, even though they differ greatly about the possible source of motivations for action, etc. Recent developments in the cognitive sciences, however, point in another direction. The categories of performance and social action are regarded as indispensable for understanding the acquisition of language[2] and mental processes in general.[3] Moreover, genuine embodiment of action[4] is highlighted, the importance of which remains largely unacknowledged (with the exception of Mead) in the competing camps sketched above.

The picture painted so far should render intelligible why debates on action, despite the diversity of the concepts, tend to focus on one of two big "attractors": rational choice theory or normative theories of action.

This is where John Dewey enters the picture: for the alternative which reaches beyond the routinized distinctions between rationality of means and rationality of ends, motivational externalism and internalism, optimization and unconditional normativity, etc. seems to be an action-theoretic conceptualization that focuses on the notion of the creativity of human action. The central thesis of such an

approach, which was pioneered by the tradition of American pragmatism and especially in the work of John Dewey, and is nowadays pursued most prominently in social theory by the German pragmatist Hans Joas,[5] claims that the model of creative action overarches the dominant models of rational and normatively oriented action. It does not simply draw attention to an additional type of action that might supplement the Weberian or Parsonsion typologies, but rather asserts that there is a creative dimension to all human action, a dimension which is inevitably distorted when cast into the frameworks of rational or normatively oriented action.

In the light of Dewey's work on the topic, it is apparent that the clear-cut dichotomy between these two camps not only is not exhaustive, but obscures the fact that they share important presuppositions: "[t]hey presuppose firstly that the actor is capable of purposive action, secondly that he has control over his own body, and thirdly that he is autonomous vis-à-vis fellow human beings and environment."[6] But if actors, prior to the actual performance, cannot clearly define the course of action nor predetermine its goals, if bodily control is lost, or restricted from the outset by body-schematic constraints,[7] or if autonomy cannot be maintained, the chances for rational decisions decrease. Rationalist theories often ignore or downplay these contingencies, and for that reason are seldom interested in the actual phylo- and ontogeny of rational actors and in the important contributions of cognitive science. However, human beings are not rational actors from the beginning of their lives on. They have to learn over many years how to act in order to enhance utility or to make moral judgments, and they can only do so because prior to forming higher-order-thoughts they are engaged in complex patterns of embodied social behavior. Emphasizing the importance of *situation*, *corporeality*, and *sociality* against the three tacit assumptions of both normative and rational choice theories of action, the pragmatists, and especially John Dewey, offer an alternative to this restricted picture. It points to habit-based and embodied creativity as an anthropological universal in human action.

OVERCOMING THE REFLEX ARC CONCEPT[8]

The best first access to Dewey's concept of action is provided by his essay "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology," which can be seen as

a sharp, anticipating criticism of behaviorism, a movement that gained momentum only decades later. Dewey locates the elementary "Unit of Behavior" – that being the title of a later reprint – in the interaction between the organism and the environment, in which the rigid separation between active movement and passive experience plays no role at all. As Dewey points out, the idea of a *reflex arc* as governing action, the most advanced tool for understanding the elementary unit of behavior in his time, still pays too much tribute to the dualistic schemas of outdated psychologies (i.e. body/mind, perception/action, etc.) by only translating them into a mechanical conjunction of stimulus and response. These "preconceived and preformulated ideas of rigid distinctions between sensations, thoughts and act," Dewey argues, should be substituted by more integrated approaches in which the "character of sensation, idea, and action [is interpreted] from their place and function in the sensorimotor circuit."[9] Analogous ideas can be found in the current debates in cognitive science among the critics of the established GOFAI-program (Good Old-Fashioned Artificial Intelligence), who are influenced by robotics and behavioral ecology. These authors, unconsciously moving along Deweyan lines, attempt to overcome the rigid input–output schema of "classic" artificial intelligence by seeing both action and cognition in terms of repeated feedback loops between the organism and its environment.[10]

Based on his interactive perspective, Dewey even already develops a highly original understanding of the *qualitative* dimension implicit in action. The important point that is elaborated in more detail in "Qualitative Thought" is the avoidance of reification.[11] As Dewey argues, if we focus on qualia as special kinds of entities instead of adverbial aspects of behavior we fall prey to essentialism and are forced to adopt a model of experience as the passive intake of information from the environment and the body. In contrast, "the structure of whatever is had by way of immediate qualitative presences is found in the recurrent modes of interaction taking place between what we term organism, on one side, and environment, on the other. This interaction is the primary fact, and it constitutes a "*trans-action*."[12] Far from being some sort of epiphenomenal addition, qualitative experience is part and parcel of this relation between organism and environment. Accordingly, Dewey claims that only the entire feedback loop between these interdependent aspects

determines in the first place what is to be considered as an input. "The so-called response is not merely *to* the stimulus; it is *into* it."[13] In this way, the needs and requirements of the "psychical organism of which sensation, idea, and movement are the chief organs,"[14] mediated over sensory-motor schemas of interaction, actively participate in determining what counts as a relevant quality to be considered. Stimuli are thus seen as those external and internal influences to which the organism has to pay attention if it is to continue its self-controlled relation to the environment. There is no such thing as a priority of stimulus over response (or vice versa); both are "strictly correlative and contemporaneous. The stimulus is something to be discovered; to be made out; if the activity affords its own adequate stimulation, there is no stimulus,"[15] except for those objective conditions that always have to be fulfilled in the functioning of the organism. Action is treated as embedded in qualitative situations, as embodied in motor impulses, as guided by the dynamics of its performance and as interactive: stimulus and response interpret each other mutually. This has an important effect on the relation between individual action and generalized agency: the former is to be seen as a sort of snapshot taken within the continuous structure of interaction between the organism – over its lifespan – and the environment. Dewey's approach here is highly original, because it links a functional treatment of mentality with the concept of organisms as entities essentially characterized by conditions of well-being, by having a good. This is a point that pertains directly to contemporary discussions on functional concepts in biology and the philosophy of mind. A dominant question here is the problem of defining functional relations without incurring an infinite regress, which can be avoided only by referring to entities endowed with a good: organisms.[16]

MEANS AND ENDS

For good reasons, then, Dewey takes a skeptical stance toward the widespread conception of action as the realization of ends by the use of appropriate means, a conception to which Max Weber, Talcott Parsons, and the current philosophical updates of David Hume's belief-desire schema all subscribe. It is important to realize that Dewey's critique of the externalist means-and-ends model is driven by his ambitious conception of action and experience as internally

permeated with meaning. Dewey's *Art as Experience* and *A Common Faith* specify two paradigmatic social spheres in which this ideal may be realized: art and religion. Nevertheless his criticism proceeds immanently by calling into question what is taken for granted, namely the categories of ends and means. Dewey takes two first steps in this direction: first, he criticizes the misguided conception of ends as anticipations of actual future states as a distortion of the contingency and openness of action. The second point is even more important and aims straight at the core of rationalistic conceptions. In Dewey's eyes it would be plainly wrong to conceive of the present anticipations in action as propositional states and contents. Instead, he conceptualizes the initial phases of actions by referring to sensory-motor schemas of performance and felt qualities with a certain gestalt in which the action is present as a unified whole. These qualitative anticipations are clearly distinct from mere fantasies or dreams. Taken together, these two innovations justify Dewey in introducing his notion of "ends-in-view"[17] in order to make sense of ends for the organization of actions in the present. This is taken one step further when he talks about a reciprocal relationship between ends and means in action. In accordance with his theory of the non-propositional gestalt character of initial anticipations, ends-in-view are taken to be relatively vague and specified only by choosing the respective means.

Probably the most salient example for this is offered by speech-acts: no one knows what exactly he/she will say when beginning to speak. The meaning of a sentence cannot be conceived of as a mentally represented end fixed and determined prior to the actual performance. In his *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, Dewey showed that symbolic meaning emerges from the interplay between qualities felt as a gestalt in the first place and the linguistic means available for their clarification and articulation.[18] The intentions of the speaker may be understood here as the ends-in-view of the general concept of action, the articulated meaning as its actual performance.

This destroys completely the alleged neutrality of means in relation to ends. Once we realize the availability of certain means, we will discover ends hitherto out of the reach of imaginations. Ends and means stand in a relation of covariance and quite often it is appropriate to say that means create ends. Not only do they specify ends according to their availability, they also modify and broaden the

space of possibilities for ends. Thus, ends-in-view should be regarded not as anticipations of future states but as flexible schemas for structuring ongoing processes. They guide choices between the accessible possibilities for action, and influence our perception of the space of possibilities. In this sense, means and ends are two sides of the same coin. "The external idea of the aims leads to a separation of means from end, while an end which grows up within an activity as plan for its direction is always both ends and means."[19]

This implies a social dimension as well, for ends which are forced onto the actor by external factors, persons, or institutions cannot become part of the feedback loops between reflection and action that characterize full-fledged action. Instead, they become rigidly fixed and arranged hierarchically above the level of performance. The means of the action will be reduced to "mere" means and activities connected with them will be assigned low social status and isolated from the higher ends. Dewey's sharp criticism of disembodied and decontextualized ends includes the use of all kinds of force in the fixation of ends, whether external or internal to the actor. The isolation and sanctification of ends as values in themselves is inappropriate for at least two reasons: in picking out one desired outcome and skipping the contingencies and unexpected consequences of action, it is unrealistic and justifies the actors in neglecting everything except the idealized end. In addition, it encourages actors to take a merely instrumentalist stance toward their own corporeality and thus blinds them to the specific demands of situations which according to Dewey are understood and assessed in the first place as expressive meanings present in emotional, qualitative totalities. The normative ideal behind all this is democratic participation in collective action, a participation that includes values, ends, means, and the specifics of situations as components of shared experience.

RETHINKING TELEOLOGY

Intrinsically motivated work, scientific, artistic, and religious activities offer many examples for modes of action which cannot be subsumed under the rigid distinction between means and ends. The consequence is that externally governed activities are bad choices as paradigms for theories of action in general. Neither the means/ends dichotomy nor the belief/desire dichotomy is capable of

explaining the creative and intrinsically meaningful modes of action Dewey had in mind.

Why then has this reduced understanding of action reached an almost hegemonic status in Western philosophy and the social sciences? This question is addressed primarily in Dewey's two books *Reconstruction in Philosophy* and *The Quest for Certainty*. Following Dewey we can say that the externalist model is closely related to a contemplative ideal of cognition that in its turn has to be seen as the theoretical attempt to cope with contingency and insecurity as inevitable features of action in the natural world. "The separation that has been instituted between theory and practice" had the consequence of substituting "the cognitive quest for absolute assurance for practical endeavor to make the existence of good more secure in experience."[20] According to the contemplation model – whose influence Dewey regards as decisive for modern epistemology – the subject of cognition faces a world composed of facts with the task to select and order them. This supposition, however, is only the reverse side of the "ends-first" conception in action theory. Both share the assumption that being-in-the-world starts with cognitive orientations and from there proceeds with the attempt to realize them in action. As if contemplative distance and tranquility were the natural state of affairs, actions in this school of thought only begin to get off the ground after the world has been epistemically scanned, meaningful ends have been fixed in the mind of the actor, and the volitional act to strive for those ends has been accomplished. Along this line, a given action reaches its peak of rationality when its ends and means have been delineated as clearly as possible in advance of the action and independent from it. This is the crucial point: the teleological conception of action presupposes that the deliberative processes which determine means and ends are factually and logically prior to the action. Cognition accordingly is basically independent from it. There exists a conceptual interdependence between teleological interpretations of human intentionality and the separation of cognition and action.[21]

Furthermore, according to Dewey the traditional conception is closely tied to the Aristotelian notion of a species as endowed with a fixed natural *telos*, which has been destroyed once and for all by evolutionary theory. In his essay "The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy"[22] (1909) he argues that Darwin has finally enabled

philosophical theory of action to embrace contingency in nature, not as something to be cherished in itself but as putting unprecedented emphasis on human responsibility and the causal role of reflective action in general. This positive evaluation of evolutionary theory's importance for action theory is a very characteristic trait of pragmatism in general and sets it apart from the German tradition of which Max Weber, influenced strongly by neo-Kantianism, is the most prominent example.

Today, teleological conceptions come in many flavors, depending on the respective academic disciplines in which the theories of action are developed. They may, for example, vary in what they take to be the "triggers" of action – intentions describable by propositional attitudes and contents, normative attitudes and reasons, emotional/volitional motives, etc. Nevertheless they seem to share an allegiance to the Cartesian separations of self and world, mind and body, which Dewey saw as overcome by the pragmatic priority of action. An illuminating example in philosophy is provided by the disputes between proponents of neo-Humean and Kantian theories along the lines of externalism vs. internalism. Bernard Williams prominently insists on coupling the efficacy of rational deliberations to the subjective motivational conditions of the actor.[23] Christine Korsgaard, on the other side, sees practical rationality precisely as residing in the capacity of being motivated to act by reasons.[24] In both cases the implicit assumption is made that action is essentially guided by states of mind, be they emotional or cognitive, which are prior to the action. Intentions, motives and values appear as belonging to some mental and/or intersubjective (e.g. Sellars's "Space of Reasons") realm that has to be connected to the world outside via volitional decisions. If we decide, following Dewey, to put situated creativity at center stage, the picture changes completely. Getting the nature of the trigger factors for action right by determining their place on a scale between radically subjective emotions and Kantian concepts of universal reason is no longer the primary issue. Instead it becomes important to conceptualize properly the relation between motives, intentions and performances with their inescapable embeddedness in situations. That in turn necessitates a fresh view on ends and intentionality in which the latter is no longer seen as some disembodied mental attitude (which was the traditional view since Brentano's rediscovery of the term in the nineteenth century).

Intentionality is to be reconceptualized in terms of the practical relation between the organism and its environment, which precedes and enables all conscious acts of defining ends and intending objects.

The Deweyan alternative to dualism and its teleological concepts of action sees perception and cognition not as preceding action, but as one of its essential components, namely the governance of behavior in problematic situations. Perception and cognition are phases of the feedback loops constituted by the activities of the organism in its environment. This conception is one of the core motives which can be found throughout Dewey's immense and long productivity. It stands behind his early critique of the reflex arc concept in psychology, guides his antiessentialist and action-theoretic concept of human nature in *Human Nature and Conduct* and finally, in his *Logic*, leads to a *Theory of Inquiry* – the subtitle of his late *opus magnum* – that underlines the continuity between scientific enterprises and the less systematic inquiries of ordinary everyday life. Ends are not fixed and intentions are not settled prior to action, but result from the reflective articulation of what is always already operative in the form of bodily action schemas and preconscious volitions. It is only as embodied minds that we achieve a relationship to the world that can be consciously elaborated, deliberated, judged according to values and norms, etc. But the body is itself embodied/embedded in a physical and social environment and phylo- and ontogenetically shaped by interaction with it. This leads to a number of consequences for action theory, of which I can pick out only three especially important ones: it enables a new understanding of habits and of perception, changes our understanding of embodiment, and introduces genuine intersubjectivity.

HABITS AND PERCEPTION

The first conceptual innovation moves the emphasis from the isolated action to the interactive character of the organism's life cycle in its entirety, from act to agency.[25] This also sheds a new light on the importance of habits – a topic that has been very much neglected in philosophical theories of action so far. According to Dewey, habits can be conceived of as self-stabilizing patterns of behavior that are both mental and corporeal, and that are correlated with processes of learning, without necessarily reaching consciousness:[26]

The reason a baby can know little and an experienced adult know much when confronting the same things is not because the latter has a "mind" which the former has not, but because one has already formed habits which the other has still to acquire. The scientific man and the philosopher like the carpenter, the physician and politician know with their habits not with their "consciousness." The latter is eventual, not a source.[27]

This is not to say that consciousness plays no important role in those specialists' knowing, but Dewey insists that a mere contemplative understanding of knowledge and/or consciousness does not suffice, because they must be intrinsically related to action. Action has a process nature and consciousness emerges from these processes as a specific phase of the action (this is also at the core of Mead's account of consciousness) in the form of "a peculiar delicate connection between highly organized habits and unorganized impulses. Its contents or objects, observed, recollected, projected and generalized into principles, represent the incorporated material of habits coming to the surface, because habits are disintegrating at the touch of conflicting impulses."[28] Habits and consciousness are seen not as opposites but as different, functionally coupled aspects of one and the same interaction cycle. Sure enough, "the more suavely efficient a habit the more unconsciously it operates. Only a hitch in its working occasions emotion and provokes thought."[29] But these "hitches" are not the exceptions to otherwise automatic behavior, because "in every waking moment, the complete balance of the organism and its environment is constantly interfered with and as constantly restored."[30] For its task of clearing up the confused situation, conscious monitoring and reconstruction of the action not only depends on old habit that "supplies content, filling, definite, recognizable subject-matter";[31] if successful it leads to the formation of new and better-organized habits. Habits and conscious interventions in this way shape each other mutually, and it is only when separated from the fallibilism built into the feedback loops between organism and environment that habit becomes rigid and degenerates to mere routine.

Dewey's action-theoretical frame of reference has important consequences for our understanding of perception too: we do not perceive the world as disengaged spectators. It is given to us as the correlate of our abilities to act and our past experiences in acting. Even when we are not about to act, the environment is given to us as opening up

certain possibilities for action and excluding others. In the light of this primacy of action, empiricism's idea of "the given" – Dewey calls it "treacherous"[32] – changes its meaning significantly and comes to stand for the acknowledgement of qualities of experience in which organism and environment are perceived in their mutual interaction. Every single action, and the development of a subject's agency as well, according to Dewey, is characterized by some "underlying pervasive quality,"[33] which gives unity to the situation. Perceptions, emotions and feelings, desires, and sensory-motor schemas of activity are thus integrated into a unified presentation of the situation which precedes any propositional articulation of ends and determines the elbowroom for action. Interestingly enough, Dewey's argumentation here develops along the same lines Martin Heidegger followed in his early lectures in Freiburg, entitled "Hermeneutics of facticity" and in the analysis of being-in-the-world given in *Being and Time*. The French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty, an important source for many cognitive scientists interested in embodiment, also pioneered this action-oriented view of perception in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. Apparently, neither Heidegger nor Merleau-Ponty was aware of Dewey's parallel project.

For Dewey, the key term in this connection is "situation." Perceptions are always parts of meaningful situations, in which an immense multitude of aspects is given as a unified quality of experience. Action always takes place in situations that delineate concrete possibilities of the determination of meaning and ends. Situations, from a pragmatic perspective, form the background for any attempt of semantic explication or for clarifying action, but it is never the implicit situation as such, but only some aspects of it that can actually be determined by (symbolic) action. The situation which is presented in some unifying quality "is not and cannot be stated or made explicit. It is taken for granted, 'understood' or implicit in all propositional symbolization."[34] Thus situations stand for the way in which possibilities of action are prefigured in embodied qualities. The adjustment of actions to the environment is no longer seen, as in the teleological concepts, as a prudent anticipation of obstacles and contingencies plus the respective modification of means and ends. Rather it is embedded in the actual performance which thereby gains a *dialogical* character:[35] situations are felt as unities with specific values; they are "lived through" in the experience of impulse and

resistance, and they may be explicated linguistically by accentuating and clarifying some of their components and possible consequences. In all three dimensions the action is regulated not prior to, but *in* the performance, as a modifying response of the actor to the confrontation of his original impulses with the given situation.

ACTION AND PLAY

This performance-oriented concept of action leads to a reassessment of play, which Dewey, in accordance with his fellow pragmatist George Herbert Mead, highlights both as a prominent instantiation of the internal-ends model and as an ontogenetic prerequisite of full-blown agency. Understandably this figures most prominently in Dewey's philosophy of education,[36] but the main argument can be found throughout his writing: playing cannot be distinguished from work by its lack of ends as the common understanding would have it. "[P]lay has an end in the sense of a directing idea which gives point to the successive acts. Persons who play are not just doing something (pure physical movement); they are *trying* to do or effect something, an attitude that involves anticipatory forecasts which stimulate their present responses."[37] The normative aspect, the deliberation of means and ends, and their interpenetration can be found both in play and in intrinsically motivated work. The latter is distinguished from the former mainly by the extension of the chains linking means and ends. Dewey's hidden opponent here is undoubtedly Aristotle[38] who opens his *Nicomachean Ethics* with a clear-cut distinction between *praxis*, characterized as an end-it-itself and *poiesis* as being constituted by external ends. As the following passage shows, Dewey sees this distinction as the result of a false ontologization of unjust social division of labor: work and play

> are equally free and intrinsically motivated, apart from false economic conditions which tend to make play into idle excitement for the well to do, and work into uncongenial labor for the poor. Work is psychologically simply an activity which consciously includes regard for consequences as a part of itself; it becomes constrained labor when the consequences are outside of the activity as an end to which activity is merely a means. Work which remains permeated with the play attitude is art – in quality if not in conventional designation.[39]

The link between play and creativity is another important point. Cultivating a playful attitude, Dewey claims, is indispensable above

all in scientific inquiry where the rejection of the means–ends schema takes the intellectualized form of "love of truth for truth's sake,"[40] irrespective of any external motives. The quoted passage is particularly revealing because it shows how Dewey's emphasis on internally meaningful actions excludes in principle any shallow instrumentalist interpretation of his rejection of absolute and preconceived ends.

BRINGING BACK THE BODY

The playful attitude exemplifies the internal coupling of situation, qualitative experience, bodily impulse, and reflective clarification of intentions that shapes Dewey's concept of embodied action. In contrast, teleological conceptions of intentionality normally subscribe to minimalist readings of embodiment. John Searle, for example, acknowledges the need to distinguish between "prior intention" and "intention in action,"[41] but that does not lead him to any upgrading of the actual bodily performance, because the intention in action is seen as entirely caused by the – so to speak – "classical" mental intention. Because Searle is not interested in conceptualizing the feedback loops between physical, sensory-motor activities and mental intentions, he reduces the embodiment of intentionality to embrainment.[42] In contrast, Dewey's criticism of teleological theories of action implies the integration not only of the body but of the physical and social environment of the body as well. This is evident, for example, in the anti-mentalistic stance he takes concerning qualities: those qualities that guide the organism in his situated activities and in the case of humans can be made explicit by semantic means that "never were 'in' the organism; they always were qualities of interaction in which both extra-organic things and organisms partake."[43] The interesting parallels of this view to the opponents of classical artificial intelligence have already been mentioned. In addition to this, many recent developments in the philosophy of mind and in cognitive science have drawn attention to the internal connection between sensory-motor schemas, actual physical movement in an environment full of contingencies, and agency. Two examples will suffice: Shaun Gallagher,[44] originally without mentioning Dewey,[45] pursues a research program focused on understanding the genesis of mind, self-consciousness, and semantic meaning out of embodied

interaction. W. Teed Rockwell has explicitly introduced Deweyan action theory into cognitive science. He argues for a radical replacement of both Cartesian dualism (even in its residual forms) and mind–brain identity theory by a Deweyan conception of embodiment that does not stop at the skin but includes events in "those parts of the environment with which the conscious organism maintains a synergetic relationship"[46] in the supervenience base for the mind.

We should, however, be careful not to overlook the crucial difference between Dewey's conception and some of the most prominent proponents of embodiment in cognitive science which can be stated in one single word: expressivity. Whereas, for example, Andy Clark conceptualizes embodiment as "a kind of extended functionalism"[47] in which the body is just one component in the interactional system, Dewey's functionalism stops short of that and insists on the *expressive* meaning of the body and on the internal connection of its felt qualities with what appears on a higher level as "care or concern for human destiny."[48] Those qualities and the higher-order ends of action developed from them cannot be cast in terms of being functional for something. They stop the otherwise inevitable regress implicit in the chains of means and ends.[49]

THE BODY AS SOCIAL

Thinking of action as essentially embodied and of the body as essentially related in its movements to conspecifics destroys the Cartesian picture of single and isolated actors who seek intersubjectivity only for the sake of coordinating their instrumental actions. The body-in-action is always already coupled to other bodies and physical properties of the environment. Even when all social embeddedness is conceptually stripped off, the lonesome actor will not be able to force his own ends onto the physical reality, but will have to perform sensory-motor interactions that will contribute substantially to the reflective determination of his intentionality. His or her senses and the motor impulses are only gradually different in this process. "The senses are the organs through which the live creature participates directly in the ongoings of the world about him ... This ... cannot be opposed to action, for motor apparatus and 'will' itself are the means by which this participation is carried on and directed."[50] According to Dewey the body with its sensory-motor schemas is communicative

and expressive as well as instrumental. Scientific research on prelinguistic small children has shown recently that they are already able to non-conceptually understand the intentions of others intersubjectively as far as these are expressed in motor activities, to which the child reacts spontaneously with changes of its own posture, gesture, and mimics.[51] Bodily actions and reactions like these constitute primary intersubjectivity and provide the basis for social communication in a more elaborate sense in which participation is brought about by role-taking (another Meadian motive). The order of methodological solipsism is now reversed: solitary agency becomes possible only because the subject can tacitly presuppose well-established practices of social exchange whose mental simulations enable reflection about the ends and means of action in the first place.

ACTIONS AND VALUES

As has been shown above, Dewey sees human action as guided by qualitative experience and its reflective articulation. The vantage point for conceptualizing action lies in the interaction between organisms and their environment which creates a continuity between the behavior of non-human living beings and human action. This may be called – and is termed so by Dewey himself – his "naturalism" and excludes any reference to mind in the Cartesian sense and to supernatural values. Nevertheless, Dewey's naturalistic stance is very special in that it combines radical antidualism and evolutionary continuity with full acknowledgment of qualitative differences between human action and organic behavior. This is evident in the way he sees the relation between action and values. Here again, his point of departure is fully naturalistic: human beings, prior to feeling attracted to values and developing conceptions of normativity, are related to the environment in a manner that is crucial for their well-being. This relation, on the side of the organism, takes the form of qualitative experiences in which situations are already assessed, albeit pre-reflectively. These qualitative dimensions comprise affective, cognitive (in a preconscious sense) and volitional aspects and constitute *valuations*. Here, once again, it would be completely misleading to apply the means–ends distinction. The preferences and affective attractions/repulsions that constitute the meaning of situations for actors prior

to their semantic and/or practical clarification, phenomenologically described, come as unities/totalities. Using Charles Peirce's terminology, we can say that they bear an iconic character. Already on this level, they are tinged with social values and Dewey clearly rejects the notion implicit in rational choice theory that preferences are to be taken as given and unquestionable starting points.[52] So far we have arrived at what Dewey, in his *Theory of Valuation* (1939) calls "valuation" or "prizing" and distinguishes sharply from "evaluation" and "appraisal." Qualitative valuations already introduce a fundamental characteristic into action, namely its selectivity. Acting means choosing and Dewey regards the latter, quite daringly, as a universal property of all nature.[53] On the organic level, choosing is ultimately grounded in the fact that organisms are entities whose functional properties are relative to their having a good. But in human beings selective behavior cannot be guided by instinctive dispositions anymore because, due to the complexity of our form of life, many conflicting preferences may manifest themselves simultaneously. "A man is susceptible, sensitive, to a vast variety of conditions and undergoes varied and opposed experiences – as lower animals do not. Consequently a man in the measure of the scope and variety of his past experiences carries in his present capacity for selective response a large set of varied possibilities."[54] The preference becomes hesitant, the course of action disintegrates and reflection emerges.

Now it is crucial to Dewey's argumentation that considering the social character of action and the uncertainty of its consequences, the reflective articulation of valuations cannot exhaust itself in quantitative assessments of their utility. This point has been elaborated prominently by Charles Taylor in his distinction between "weak" and "strong" evaluations.[55] Arranging the factually desired hierarchically in the order of factual strength is clearly different from distinguishing the factually desired from that which is normatively desirable in the light of past, socially shared, and embodied experience. Dewey calls the reflective higher-order evaluations of our valuations in this sense values. They are neither mere extensions of preferences nor Platonic entities and that means they are discovered (being implicit in qualitative experience we feel drawn to) and created (made explicit in contingent processes of social articulation) as well.

The "desirable," or the object which *should* be desired (valued) does not descend out of the a priori blue nor descend as an imperative from a moral Mount Sinai. It presents itself because past experience has shown that hasty action upon uncriticized desire leads to defeat and possibly to catastrophe. The "desirable" as distinct from the "desired" does not then designate something at large or a priori. It points to the difference between the operation and consequences of unexamined impulses and those of desires that are the product of investigation of conditions and consequences.[56]

All this is related closely to Dewey's concept of individual actions as parts of an agency that develops in the course of the agent's individual and social experience. Actions are intrinsically qualitative and embodied, and this is why they take place at all and are endowed with meanings in the first place. However, they contain a reflective aspect as well which develops along with the performances and their iterations and leads to the articulation of values. Far from being a mere addendum to the theory of action, they belong to its core and should be viewed as the most important and final piece of Dewey's rejection of rationalist and teleological conceptions. Values combine the cognitive aspects of reflexivity with the affective attractivity and corporeality of something given in direct, qualitative experience, a point Dewey states unmistakably when he links the existence of ends-in-view with what he calls "affective-*ideational*-motor activity."[57] The creativity of action finds its specifically human expression in the transformation of qualitatively experienced action into values which are neither the preferences of rational choice theory nor norms external to the qualitative and embodied dimension of action. As such, they are intrinsic components not only of agency, but of every single act performed. With his comprehensive concept of value-guided, embodied, and social action, Dewey has developed a convincing alternative to normative and utilitarian theories, one that allows for an integration of important insights from cognitive science and bridges the gap to the ongoing debates in the humanities and the social sciences about values.

NOTES

1. Among them, Amartya K. Sen with his famous essay "Rational Fools: A Critique of the Behavioural Foundations of Economic Theory," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 6 (1977), 317–344.

2. See M. Tomasello, *Constructing a Language: A Usage-based Theory of Language Acquisition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).
3. See M. Donald, *A Mind so Rare: The Evolution of Human Consciousness* (New York: Norton 2001).
4. See S. Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
5. See H. Joas, *The Creativity of Action* (Chicago: Chicago University Press 1996). The account given in this introduction is partly based upon Joas's work and sometimes paraphrases – with permission of the author – his own formulations.
6. Joas, *The Creativity of Action*, p. 147.
7. The concept of unconscious body schemas both constraining and enabling intentional movements is developed clearly in Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind*.
8. For reasons of brevity and clarity I neglect the internal development of Dewey's concept in favor of a systematic account.
9. J. Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), *EW* 5:96.
10. Andy Clark, in his influential book *Being There: Putting Brain, Body and World Together Again* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1997), p. 36 sees: "perception, action and thought as bound together in a variety of complex and interpenetrating ways" and focuses on those "action loops" which integrate body, mind and environment as "equal partners."
11. J. Dewey, "Qualitative Thought" (1930), *LW* 5:243–263.
12. J. Dewey, "Conduct and Experience" (1930), *LW* 5:220; emphasis in the original.
13. Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology," p. 98; emphasis in the original. Note how Dewey includes "movements" among the organs of the psychic.
14. Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology," p. 97.
15. Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology," p. 109.
16. See P. McLaughlin, "On Having a Function and Having a Good," *Analyse und Kritik* 24 (2002), 130–143.
17. J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (1916), *MW* 9:112.
18. J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *LW* 12.
19. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 113.
20. J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *LW* 4:28.
21. Many contemporary philosophers influenced by the cognitive sciences would strongly underline Dewey's thesis that cognition depends on action. See, for example, Alva Noë's influential book *Action in Perception* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2004). However, as far as I can see, the connection between teleological

conceptions and the contrary claim that action depends on preceding cognitions has hitherto been stated explicitly only in the works of Hans Joas.

22. See J. Dewey, "The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy" (1909), *MW* 4:14.
23. See B. Williams, "Internal and External Reasons," in *Rational Action: Studies in Philosophy and Social Sciences*, ed. R. Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 17–28.
24. See Christine M. Korsgaard, "Skepticism about Practical Reason," *Journal of Philosophy* 83 (1986), 5–25.
25. In cognitive science, agency is a prominent topic as well, but usually treated as a phenomenal quality that accompanies the individual act (cf., for example, S. Gallagher and D. Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind: An Introduction to Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science* (London: Routledge, 2008), chapter 8. Dewey's account, as will be shown in a few paragraphs, includes this aspect, but combines it with the more comprehensive view of agents in their course of life and their social surroundings.
26. Thus, in Dewey's concept of action, an important role is already assigned to those processes that have recently gained prominence in experimental psychology under the heading of "incidental" or "implicit" learning. See P. A. French and D. Rünger, "Implicit Learning," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 12 (2003), 13–18.
27. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922) *MW* 14:128.
28. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 128.
29. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 125.
30. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 125.
31. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 126.
32. Dewey, "Qualitative Thought," p. 254.
33. Dewey, "Qualitative Thought," p. 254.
34. Dewey, "Qualitative Thought," p. 247.
35. H. G. Wright, *Means, Ends and Medical Care* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), p. 84. H. G. Wright provides a convincing example (namely the treatment of autism) of how this dialogical conception might change the established routines in medical care.
36. Chapter 15 in *Democracy and Education*, pp. 202–218, is devoted to "Play and work in the curriculum."
37. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 211; emphasis in original.
38. In *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1922), *MW* 14:22, the Aristotelian notion of "an end which exhausts all realization and excludes all potentiality" delivers also the main example for what Dewey calls "*the* main philosophical fallacy," namely the generalizing inference from situational to universal ends, pp. 122–123; emphasis in the original.

39. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 214.
40. J. Dewey, "Play" (1912–1913), *MW* 7:322.
41. J. Searle, *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 94.
42. Searle writes that, "[i]ntentional states are both caused by and realized in the structure of the brain," *Intentionality*, p. 15. Consequently, Searle's book on intentionality closes with an epilogue entitled "Intentionality and the brain," but never pays attention to the fact that the brain evolved in order to control the body moving around in its environment.
43. J. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1925), *LW* 1:225.
44. Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind*.
45. This has since changed. In his recently published chapter, "Philosophical antecedents of situated cognition," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Situated Cognition*, ed. P. Robbins and M. Aydede (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 35–52, Gallagher strongly underlines the importance of Dewey for the study of the embodied mind. I am grateful to Sven Walter for drawing my attention to this chapter.
46. See W. T. Rockwell, *Neither Brain nor Ghost. A Nondualist Alternative to the Mind–Brain Identity Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2005). See also J. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1925), *LW* 1:224, where he writes, "To see the organism *in* nature, the nervous system in the organism, the brain in the nervous system, the cortex in the brain is the answer to the problems which haunt philosophy."
47. A. Clark, "Pressing the Flesh. A Tension in the Study of Embodied, Embedded Mind?," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 6 (2008), 37.
48. Dewey, "Qualitative Thought," p. 245.
49. See McLaughlin, "On Having a Function and Having a Good."
50. J. Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934), *LW* 10:28.
51. See Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind*, pp. 225–228, for a summary of recent research.
52. See his fierce attack on classical liberalism in J. Dewey, "Philosophies of Freedom" (1928), *LW* 3:99.
53. Dewey, "Philosophies of Freedom," p. 109.
54. Dewey, "Philosophies of Freedom," p. 95.
55. Taylor, refering to Harry Frankfurt's well-know distinction between "first-" and "second-order-desires," points out that only normatively strong evaluations will support full-fledged agency. See C. Taylor, *Philosophical Papers*, vol. I: *Human Agency and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
56. J. Dewey, "Theory of Valuation" (1939), *LW* 13:219.
57. Dewey, "Theory of Valuation," p. 218.

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8 Dewey's moral philosophy

In his 1930 foreword to *Human Nature and Conduct*, Dewey wrote: "In the eighteenth century, the word Morals was used in English literature with a meaning of broad sweep. It included all the subjects of distinctly humane import, all of the social disciplines as far as they are intimately connected with the life of man and as they bear upon the interests of humanity ... Were it not for one consideration [this] volume might be said to be an essay in continuing the tradition of David Hume."[1] Dewey's contemporaries saw Hume as a skeptic whose moral inquiries were meant to explain away rather than explain our knowledge of moral values and principles. To Dewey, Hume's intent was instead to provide a new and improved grounding for moral knowledge and principles, by demonstrating that moral phenomena are natural phenomena, susceptible to methods of inquiry commensurate with those of the natural sciences. This for Dewey was the "inexpungable element of truth in his teachings."[2]

Dewey, like Hume, was an ethical naturalist who believed that moral phenomena are natural phenomena. But unlike Hume and his twentieth-century successors, such as the emotivists Charles L. Stevenson and A. J. Ayer,[3] Dewey was not a non-cognitivist. He did not accept the view that moral claims such as "Her character is exemplary" or "His conduct was vicious" are pseudo-propositions that express speakers' subjective attitudes or tastes rather than verifiable assertions about their own or others' conduct or character. Consequently, he also rejected the view that values, unlike facts, are neither responsive to reason nor empirically verifiable.

In contrast, Dewey holds that value judgments, moral and non-moral, make assertions about things, acts, and persons that can be true or false in a pragmatic sense. But unlike many cognitivist

naturalists, Dewey does not take his naturalism to entail moral realism: the position that there are specifically "moral" facts, properties, or relations to which moral propositions and principles refer. A value judgment, Dewey holds, is a practical judgment: a judgment about the practical adequacy of a course of action to perform a specific function. As such, it is empirically confirmable. Moral judgments are simply a special case of practical judgments, distinguished by their focus on one aspect of what he calls the "double-relation" or "binary" character[4] of making and acting upon practical judgments. When a practical problem is resolvable in different ways, some of which involve actions liable to react back upon the agent's character, strengthening some dispositions to act while weakening others, recognition of these potential reactive effects problematizes the agent's situation in a new way. The agent must also consider the functional implications of these, in light of his or her situation now more broadly considered. Moral practical judgments are thus higher-order, reflective practical judgments that take account of the effects upon ourselves of accepting or rejecting narrower judgments about how to act in particular cases.

Cognitivist theories sacrifice one attractive feature of many noncognitivisms – the latter's simple, straightforward "internalist" account of our motivation to act upon moral judgments. For emotivists or Humean subjectivists, the "conclusions" of practical deliberations are really reflectively formed subjective attitudes. This explains why people are motivated to act upon their "conclusions" either about particular cases ("That act is despicable") or types of cases ("Such acts are despicable"). Motivation to action is internal to (or constitutive of) one's "conclusion." For cognitivists, however, conclusions of moral reasoning are propositions about what is or is not the case. But this can seem to leave our motivation to act upon them unexplained.

There is, however, a counterintuitive consequence to the internalist approach. It seems to entail that any moral conclusion sincerely arrived at will automatically be motivational even if ultimately defeated (e.g. by uncontrollable impulses). Yet sincere individuals sometimes arrive at conclusions about what to do and yet feel no motivation to act accordingly.[5] Contemporary internalists try to explain this phenomenon away either by treating such events as products of abnormal psychological states (such as

depression) or of imaginative but counterfactual reasoning, where the reasoner arrives at moral conclusions from the perspective of individuals or groups whose attitudes she does not share.[6] But are such situations really as abnormal or deviant from ordinary moral judgment as these defenses require us to suppose? Dewey notes how often we sincerely "hoist the banner of the ideal, and then march in the direction that concrete conditions suggest and reward."[7] Dissociation of judgment and attitude in problematic situations is arguably the rule, not the exception. So something is surely wrong with non-cognitivist explanations.

The root problem, Dewey holds, is reliance upon what Wilfrid Sellars would later call "the myth of the given,"[8] the uncritical assumption that certain kinds of experience, e.g. sensation, are basic forms of cognition: a kind of directly "given" knowledge of ourselves or the things around us. Sellars argued that sensation cannot play this role, because sensation is not itself cognitive. It is a physiological event that only takes on cognitive import when interpreted in light of a conceptual scheme. Dewey offers a similar critique in his attacks upon the "spectator theory of knowledge"[9] – the theory that our knowledge of the world is built upon a foundation of primitive sensory cognitions. Like Sellars, Dewey held that sensations are non-cognitive physiological events, like breathing or digesting, that take on cognitive significance for us only when we interpret them as signs of events or processes in which we are interested. But Dewey goes beyond Sellars in attacking another form of the myth of the given – the myth that our passions in some sense "give" us values.

Dewey writes: "Contemporary discussion of value and valuation suffers from confusion of the two radically different attitudes – that of direct, active, non-cognitive experience of goods and bads and that of valuation, the latter being simply a mode of judgment like any other form of judgment."[10] In other words, they confuse causal stimuli *to* action with reasons *for* action. The implications should be sufficient to make us reject this: (1) that strictly speaking we cannot disagree about values, because evaluative talk merely expresses tastes or desires that cannot be true or false; (2) since values cannot be true or false, they cannot be subject to rational critique; and (3) since our tastes and desires are immediately given, we cannot sincerely be in doubt about what we value. But each of these, Dewey argues, is patently false. We do disagree about both tastes and values;

judgments about tastes and values are subjected to critical scrutiny; and genuine doubt about our own tastes and desires is commonplace.

If we are to continue the tradition of Hume's naturalism, Dewey believed, we cannot ignore these phenomena of our moral experience. Since Hume's and other non-cognitivist forms cannot account for our moral psychology, values, and moral deliberation, ethical naturalism must be reconstructed accordingly. This task Dewey undertakes in texts such as "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," *Human Nature and Conduct*, the 1932 *Ethics*, and *Theory of Valuation*. In what follows, I shall discuss Dewey's pragmatic naturalistic treatments of our moral psychology, the nature of value, practical deliberation, and finally their implications for normative theorizing.

NATURALISTIC MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Human beings are first and foremost organic beings whose makeup includes a variety of natural organic processes, including sensations and what have traditionally been called "passions." Broadly speaking, non-cognitivism identifies valuing with the latter. Dewey rejects this, arguing that although passions are among the conditions necessary for values, passions are not forms of valuing and thus do not "give" us values. In "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," he writes, "the present paper takes its stand with the position stated by Hume in the following words:

> A passion is an original existence, or, if you will, modification of existence; and contains not any representative quality, which renders it a copy of any other existence or modification. When I am angry I am actually possest with the passion, and in that emotion have no more a reference to any other object, than when I am thirsty, or sick, or more than five feet high.[11]

To better capture the dynamic character of the processes in question, Dewey drops the traditional term "passion" in favor of "*impulse*."

We each begin life as bundles of organic impulses that prompt movement in and about our environments. In young children, these "affective-motor" capacities cause various kinds of behavior (crying, suckling, urination, writhing) but not actions because none of these behaviors are intentional. A child must first associate its impulsive behaviors with their consequences before it can act intentionally. It has to learn that crying is followed by attention from adults, suckling

by relaxation, writhing by a change of position, and so forth, before it becomes possible for it to cry, suckle, or writhe with the object of obtaining these results. Only then does it begin to form *desires* that these specific events should occur or to act to realize them.

Desires to do, get, or avoid, unlike impulses, are at least minimally cognitive states. They involve beliefs about the world and intentions regarding it. Which desires a child will form and what the objects of those desires will be depends upon an interplay between impulse and environment. The human mind is not pre-equipped with latent desires waiting to be triggered by contact with their predetermined objects. Anything can be an object of desire provided the context is right. But in the absence of obstacles to action, we neither form nor act upon desires. Thus desires cannot be the motivational basis for all human action. They are instead just one kind of conduit through which impulsive drives are released.

What we desire is determined by the challenges and resources provided by our environments, most especially by our *social environment*. An infant indiscriminately reaches for anything that attracts its attention. However, infants must rely on others to remove obstacles to their impulsive activity. Thus their desires are shaped from the first by the customs and attitudes of their surrounding culture. They learn to desire and demand socially approved objects and disregard or retreat from those which are socially disapproved. As they come to recognize that some of these objects are of significance in many different sorts of situations, they gradually develop stable enduring *interests* in those objects.

For a young child, a situation is problematic if it thwarts immediate impulses. For adults, situations become problematic when they thwart either impulses or *habits*. Habits are acquired dispositions to act that we develop as we become adept at recognizing and consistently resolving recurring types of problems: "formed in process of exercising biological aptitudes [habits] are the sole agents of observation, recollection, foresight, and judgment."[12] They are not, as we wish our "bad" habits were, contingent, accident features of ourselves or our behavior. They are indispensable mechanisms without which we could not perceive, think, recall, speak, or act in consistent, effective, or coordinated ways.[13] An important advantage of habits is that they allow us to focus our attention on other, less routine matters. A disadvantage is that they can elude our attention even when

they are counterproductive. Habits, like desires and interests, are conduits through which impulsive energies are channeled, but these conduits often function beneath the level of conscious attention.

Taken together, Dewey's analysis presents us with a considerably more complex account of the sources of our motivations to act than did contemporary non-cognitivist internalisms. For Dewey, desire is not the only or the most important source of motivations to action. On the contrary, for Dewey, postulating some sort of desire to account for every action would violate the principle of Ockham's razor. Desires are unnecessary explanatory entities whenever our acts can be explained by reference to our settled habits and the presence or absence of their particular initiating conditions. Habits, unlike desires, are *not* subjective "attitudes," pro or con. They are acquired psychological mechanisms through which certain beliefs about our situations come to be directly motivating. Say it is my habitual practice to put my daughter to bed at 8pm and that I come to believe that it is now 8pm. This belief not only supplies a reason for putting her to bed (it is her bedtime), but is also directly motivating *independent* of my desiring or having any other pro-attitude towards putting her to bed simply because it is a trigger for a habitual practice.

In a problematic situation, however, either we lack acquired dispositions and habitual practices adequate to manage a situation, or the situation is one where those we do have come into conflict. We are forced to inquire about what must be done, to ask ourselves what has gone wrong and what remedy to apply. Sometimes we discover the problem rests upon a mistaken belief. The situation that seemed so unusual is on closer examination actually familiar and readily resolvable. Or the situation in which we are simultaneously disposed to respond in incompatible ways, on closer examination lacks features we thought were present and so also the inducement to conflicting responses. We see how to resolve our dilemmas, and are, by the same token, motivated to act accordingly.

But we are not always so fortunate. On closer examination, novel situations do not always resolve into familiar patterns, nor do conflicts dissolve. In genuinely novel situations, we have to discover what solutions we might desire and then consider how desirable each might be. First, we search for possible objects of desire by an *imaginative rehearsal* of the courses of action open to us. If two or

more of these are immediately attractive, we then shift to a functional assessment of their respective adequacy to the problem before us, asking which is, functionally speaking, more *desirable* as means of resolving the crisis. In cases of conflicting dispositions or habitual practices, we can move more directly to comparative assessment, asking which ways of responding are more desirable given the problem before us. In either case, the practical judgment we arrive at (e.g. "act x will resolve the problem thus and so") is descriptive and so empirically verifiable. Yet there is no mystery about why we are motivated to act upon it. The motivations that necessitated deliberation in the first place explain our motivation to act upon the solutions our deliberations identify.

VALUES AND VALUATION, ENDS AND MEANS

For Dewey, all practical judgment is functional or instrumental. But this should not be taken to mean that practical judgments are only concerned with instrumental "values." "Value" and "valuation," Dewey holds, ambiguously refer to two different ways of responding to a thing, act, or person: "prizing" or "esteeming" versus "appraising" or "estimating." The first category includes immediate, uncritical subjective attitudes, the second, critical instrumental judgments. These categories stand in no particular relation to one another. A thing may be prized yet considered dysfunctional in a given situation or despised yet functionally exemplary. Which kinds of "values" we weigh in a particular case is a matter of the perspective we take upon it. Nothing about things themselves determines which perspective(s) we must take.

This explains why Dewey denies that traditional distinctions between values as *inherent* or *intrinsic*, on the one hand, and *instrumental* or *extrinsic*, on the other, reflect real differences in the things, acts, or persons to which they are attributed. On his view, if something T is prized in situation S, for qualities inherent to it, then within S, T is inherently valued even if it is also desired as a means to altering S. "There is nothing in the nature of prizing or desiring to prevent their being directed to things which are means, and there is nothing in the nature of means to militate against their being desired and prized."[14] And if in S, we opt to isolate the immediate value assigned to some T from instrumental consideration,

then within S, T may be said to be "unconditionally" or "intrinsically" valuable (although strictly speaking humans never prize anything unconditionally, if by that we mean independent of *any* conditions whatsoever).

Because the value status of any thing, event, or person is dependent on the perspective taken, that status will shift from one category to another as changes in our interests, selves, or situations lead us to change our perspectives. I can, for example, value pleasure for its immediate, inherent qualities and at the same time value it as a means or instrument for improving my bad mood or distracting me from some painful or alarming prospect. I can value pleasure unconditionally within the limits of some particular situation, for example, when choosing an entree at a restaurant, or conditionally, if I exclude entrees made with farmed salmon from consideration, because I disapprove of salmon farming on environmental grounds.

For Dewey, distinctions between "means" and "ends" are also perspective-dependent. When we value a thing as a "means," we appraise it from a perspective in which functional considerations take priority. When we adopt something as "end," our perspective is one within which, for the moment at least, functionality is not a priority. This opens the way to explaining how ends as well as means can be instrumentally evaluated. For Dewey, means *define* ends and ends means. Potential ends of action – "ends" we might adopt "in view" of a particular set of circumstances – are defined pragmatically in terms of the operations required to achieve them. But the relation of means and ends goes much deeper than this. For it is as means that we appraise ends in view when we must choose between them. In a sense, Dewey writes, ends in view are not really "ends or termini of action at all. They are terminals of deliberation, and so turning points *in* activity."[15] For example, a mariner who sees a storm ahead decides to sail for a port. Given his interest in staying afloat and continuing his voyage, getting to the port becomes his end in view and the object of his desire. But neither the port nor the security it represents for him is desired purely for its own sake. Each is also desired as a means of resolving the obstacle to continuing the voyage. And that end, the voyage, is itself a means to further ends. We operate, Dewey says, "in a temporal continuum of activities in which each successive stage is equally end and means."[16]

The mariner with a choice of ports can meaningfully deliberate about his ends because they are also means. Perhaps one port offers maximum safety from the storm but will greatly delay the voyage, resulting in financial penalties. A second port offers less safety but a shorter delay. A third possibility is to return to his home port, which would also impose financial penalties but allow the crew to have shore leave with their families. He will appraise each potential end in view accordingly, in order to decide how *desirable* each is overall. Time allowing, he might also consider what his rankings reveal about his character and whether that character is really to his taste, all things considered, or stands in need of reform – a reform that would be helped or hindered by some of the options before him. As ends are also means, not only our ends, but also our tastes and desires for them can be objects of practical judgment. "Instead of there being no disputing about tastes," Dewey argues, "they are the one thing worth disputing about."[17]

PRACTICAL DELIBERATION

What does all this mean for practical deliberation, especially moral deliberation? (1) If ends and means are reciprocally determined, with ends forming an endless continuum, is our selection of ends in view in any given case necessarily arbitrary? (2) Whose desires and interests should be considered in our deliberations: ours or those of others also? (3) Are some sorts of activities right and some character traits virtuous independent of our tastes, desires, or habits? Or are the concepts of right and virtue directly reducible to the concept of goods or ends? (4) What role will moral principles play in our practical deliberations?

Ends and means in practical deliberation

As to the first question, Dewey holds that our starting point cannot be purely arbitrary, since "apart from a condition of tension between a person and environing conditions there is, as we have seen, no occasion for evocation of desire for something else; there is nothing to induce the formation of an end, much less the formation of one end rather than any other out of the indefinite number of ends theoretically possible."[18] Situations that present no obstacles provide no

occasion for deliberation. We desire and deliberate about our desires only when the activities that constitute our current situation are disrupted. "Here," says, Dewey, "is the factor which cuts short the process of foreseeing and weighing ends-in-view in their function as means. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof and sufficient also is the *good* of that which does away with the existing evil."[19]

One might object that this makes moral practical reasoning such a stop-gap, piecemeal affair that its conclusions must inevitably be incoherent and even self-defeating. But this objection will not arise if we bear in mind that (1) most of what we do is directed by habit, and that (2) "present situation" does not refer to a specific instant in time. First, our habits, intellectual, aesthetic, social, and moral, account for the consistency of our tastes, perspective, character, and practices. The conservatism of habits and habitual practices effectively blocks erratic variations in our deliberations from case to case. Second, when Dewey refers to our "present" situation or problem, he does not mean "a sharp narrow knife-blade in time."[20] Individuals' present situations are composed of all the activities in which they are concurrently engaged. Thus the "present situation" in which I am composing this essay also includes all the other projects with which I am attempting to harmonize this one: getting myself to a noon meeting, checking in with a sick child by phone, remembering to get my dog to the vet tomorrow, having lectures prepared for next week, deciding which party to support in the upcoming Canadian elections, and so forth. Whether and how significantly problematic my situation may become depends upon how many of the activities composing it would be affected by a particular disruption: the fewer and the less significant, the less problematic it will be. A telephone call coming just as I am leaving for my meeting may cause so little disruption that it barely registers as a problem at all. But the reverse will be true if the call informs me that my sick child must be taken to a clinic immediately, disrupting numerous other projects. Because many of the projects composing any "present" situation will be long-term ones (managing a career, parenting, etc.), our deliberations must take this into account. Only if we systematically failed to investigate the impact of particular disruptions upon all the projects that constitute the particular present situations we are in, would we habitually arrive at piecemeal or self-defeating judgments.

Individual versus social ends

The second question Dewey would trace to two faulty assumptions about human nature: that humans are inherently egoistic beings and that the situations within which individuals act are individualized in such a way that others' involvement in them is somehow accidental or contingent.

Humans are not inherently egoistic, Dewey insists. We do not naturally care exclusively for our own well-being. "Deliberate unscrupulous pursuit of self-interest is as much conditioned upon social opportunities, training, and assistance as is ... action prompted by a beaming benevolence."[21] Our natural impulsive tendencies are neither egoistic nor altruistic – until or unless circumstances focus their energies into self-regarding or other-regarding patterns of habits, interests, or desires. The single most important factor in these circumstances is our social environment. The social tastes and practices of our society shape the development of our own desires, habits, and dispositions, directing them to socially approved objects with the result that most of what we will immediately enjoy or find intrinsically satisfying will be objects and practices others share and endorse. And among those socially approved objects are other persons and their interests. "This social saturation is," Dewey points out, "a matter of fact, not of what should be."[22] And it does not end with childhood. We know our children are helpless to discover or pursue ends without social support but forget that the same is true of ourselves – that no adult human being can pursue any sustained project without the involvement and support of others. To the extent that others are directly involved in any given project our good *is* their good and vice versa. When others are not directly involved, it is still the case that any threats to their interests our activities pose, threats that might turn them into antagonists, are also threats to our own good and vice versa.

This is why we do not normally experience our situations as limited to or involving only ourselves or our personal interests. Every situation is inherently social, composed of projects all more or less shared with others. Thus in every case of deliberation, we do take some account of others' welfare and interests, because, being human, we cannot do otherwise. But we can and often do fail to take into account all those whose interests our choices actually affect. No

one can succeed in their activities unless these are shared and supported by others, but people can and often do limit the set of individuals with whom they are prepared to cooperate to relatively small exclusive groups (family members, friends, tribes, etc.), treating only their welfare as salient and ignoring outsiders. And, of course, people can and do regularly deceive themselves about the extent to which their activities and successes are actually shared with others and so foolishly ignore the interests of others on whom they actually depend. Either course is apt to antagonize those whose interests were disregarded and so prove self-defeating, both because those most antagonized will offer direct opposition, but more importantly because their cooperation was not enlisted. The fewer stakeholders in a project, the less the capacity available to pursue it effectively and to make it a source of personal satisfaction to all the stakeholders concerned.[23]

The relation of good, right, and virtue

Because Dewey views practical judgments as judgments about the adequacy of adopting particular ends as means for overcoming problems, he is often suspected of taking a simplistic, reductivist view of the relation of the concepts of right action and of virtue to the concept of good. Dewey's early pragmatic treatments of moral philosophy suggest that he once thought virtue reducible to good. But by the 1930s, he had concluded that good, right, and virtue were "three independent factors in morals"[24] no one of which was conceptually reducible to the others.

Starting with the concepts of good and right, Dewey declares that they "have different origins, they flow from independent springs, so that neither of the two can derive from the other."[25] We attribute goodness to features of situations that are either uncritically desired or prized or that have been judged desirable after critical reflection on our interests, habits, and projects. "Right" by contrast, is a kind of value attributed to *claims* individuals and groups make against one another in virtue of cooperative practices they share. Being inherently social, we are disposed to live together and cooperate in shared projects. Many of these shared projects, especially those most important to the survival and success of a group, such as rearing children, obtaining food or shelter, and ensuring security, are, for efficiency's

sake, developed into sets of routine "practices," "roles," or "offices" defined by rules specifying the purpose of these practices, what conduct is integral to them, who may engage in or benefit from them, and so forth. The rules that define practices take on normative or regulative force whenever anyone chooses to engage in them. They determine what counts as successful performance of a practice, how participants must treat one another, what practice-based benefits they are entitled to receive if they enact the practice successfully or must forfeit if they fail.

Ultimately a decision to endorse and/or engage in practice can be warranted instrumentally if it creates or sustains a state of affairs that is desirable overall. But once we are committed to a practice, what it is right or wrong for us to do or claim is not determined by our tastes or desires but by the rules of the practice. These are, in Kantian terms, hypothetical imperatives. Their authority is not wholly unconditional (since one can always refuse assent to a practice) but is not conditioned on agreement with our likes or dislikes. While we may participate because the practice contributes to our welfare (either in its own right or instrumentally) this does not mean that judgments of right are conceptually reducible to judgments of good.[26]

Virtue is "a third independent variable in morals."[27] We admire certain character traits and deplore others. Praise and blame directed to character traits arise both from considerations of their consequences for our ends and of their implications for one another's abilities to fulfill the roles and practices we undertake. But beyond these considerations is what Hume calls the "immediate agreeableness" of some character traits to our tastes and sensibilities. Those we find immediately agreeable we consider excellences or virtues even when they conflict with efficient pursuit of the good or the recognition of justified claims. Those we find immediately repugnant we deplore as defects or vices even when they increase efficient pursuit of the good or the fulfillment of duties. Thus the category of the virtuous and vicious is in large part constituted by sentiments "so spontaneous, so natural, and as we say 'instinctive' that they do not depend either upon considerations of objects that will when attained satisfy desire nor upon making certain demands upon others."[28]

The tastes and sentiments in question are really no less socially saturated or "natural" than are our desires and social practices. Thus we can and should question our tastes and sentiments, asking

ourselves whether they have been critically formed and whether it is desirable for us to be the sort of people who have them. Still, admiration is neither a kind of desire nor a way of recognizing a claim. It is a distinct form of responsiveness to persons, characters, and actions.

So moral practical deliberation is irreducibly *pluralistic*. "What is good from the standpoint of desire is wrong from the standpoint of social demands; what is bad from the first standpoint may be heartily approved [as virtuous] by public opinion."[29] It is often objected that pluralistic theories of value are undesirable theoretically because they cannot provide unequivocal guidance for action when values come into conflict. Dewey rejects this as an unrealistic demand, arising from a desire for certainty where none is to be had. "Moral problems exist because we have to adapt to one another as best we can certain elements coming from each source."[30] There cannot be real moral problems unless moral values really can come into conflict – something reductivist accounts refuse to allow in the name of theoretical simplicity. Is it any surprise that the principles they generate so often seem mere counsels of perfection, inapplicable to the flesh and blood problems of real human beings? To Dewey, such approaches purchase theoretical simplicity at too high a practical cost.

Principles

Consistent with his value pluralism, Dewey holds that there is no one "single commensurable principle" that can be appealed to resolve problematic situations, individual or social. Nor should we expect any of our moral principles to "tell us" what we should do. Since Dewey also holds that practical inquiry is continuous with natural scientific experimental inquiry, the principles it yields will be hypothetical, not categorical, and descriptive rather than normative in form. "The object of moral principles," Dewey writes, "is to supply standpoints and methods which will enable the individual [acting individually or collectively] to make for himself an analysis of the elements of good and evil, in the particular situation" under review.[31] That is, they are generalizations or generalized descriptions of relations between ends and means, practices and duties, dispositions and approbation, that we can use to determine what the obstacles to

individual or collective endeavors are and what may be expected of any proposed solutions.

Every problematic situation is unique, but there are "generic features" of human nature, situations, and outcomes, that lend themselves to generalization. These generalizations are both probabilistic and defeasible: they will fail to predict actual outcomes in a certain percentage of cases and fail to be applicable at all (i.e. "defeated") when problematic situations deviate too far from the samples from which the generalizations were made.[32] Likewise, every practice is unique, but there are generic features of practices we can capture in defeasible generalizations about what constitutes satisfactory performance of a practice, or satisfactory performance by a practice of its role within a set of social practices. And finally there are generic features of the admirable in human character traits that lend themselves to similar sorts of generalizations.

Commonsense morality is a vast repository of such principles to whose use our cultural training has habituated us. Being habituated to them, we can immediately and efficiently employ them at need, but are often so unconscious of them we give them little or no critical scrutiny. Since their role is descriptive and explanatory, they can be checked for their fruitfulness as analytical tools for assisting us in understanding problematic situations and predicting the outcomes of various kinds of responses. Principles failing these tests should be reassessed and revised accordingly. Because the roles, resources, and obstacles we meet with individually and collectively change over time, past assumptions about what should count as paradigmatic instances of any of these need periodic review. Likewise, our notions of justice, equity, and benevolence, of the significance of institutional and personal practices, and the claims they justify, must be continually rethought in light of the ongoing social transformations caused by technological changes in production, communications, medicine, the arts, and education. And to be fully informed, this rethinking needs to be open and public, to take into account the experiences and proposals of everyone affected. Consequently, Dewey holds, the questioning of traditional principles of value is not, as some fear, a sign of moral decay, but just the reverse.

Returning to the issue of "amoralism" – of the inability to experience sincere moral judgments as motivating – we can see why Dewey

saw this as a commonplace phenomenon. While it is true that any *end* we correctly judge desirable is already desired and so directly motivating (to some degree), the same does not hold for judgments of right or virtue. To judge that a claim is justified or right is to judge relative to a practice. That judgment can be directly motivating, independent of any desires we may have, but only if the practice is one which we value and to which we are habituated. If not, the judgment may have no immediate motivational force *even if* we endorse the practice. Though sincere, it will be motivationally inert until or unless we have both endorsed the practice and habituated ourselves to the judgments and acts it involves.

With the virtues, the link between judgment and action is even less direct than with judgments of right. Admiration need not motivate any action at all. I can admire the courage or tenacity of Sir Edmund Hillary or Tensing Norgay, without feeling the least inclination to emulate them. The prospect of popular applause or a realization that I would be better equipped to succeed in my life projects if I emulated them may be required to turn my admiration into a motivation to action. Failing this, I can judge their characters admirable and yet feel no motivation to reform my own.

For Dewey, a more serious source of dissonance between judgment and motivation arises as an effect of the conservatism of habits and social practices. We are habituated to the use of principles and practices of value judgment that our customs and social institutions support. Settled habits, backed by social custom, can come to seem so "natural" that we may forget their origins as generalizations from our predecessors' empirical inquiries into situations whose generic features may no longer be representative of the ones we face. When this happens, the application of these traditional principles and practices to present issues can generate conclusions so unsatisfactory as to render them motivationally inert. Confusion about the source of the motivational gap leads some to blame it on personal or social weakness of will and others to conclude that moral values and requirements are inherently "unrealizable." For Dewey, however, the root cause of these real life cases of "amoralism" is sincere but mistaken interpretation of the nature of moral principles. The solution is to see them as tentative outcomes of ongoing, collective human inquiry into the means and methods available for ameliorating serious obstacles to the satisfactory conduct of personal and social life.

PRAGMATIC NORMATIVE THEORIZING

During Dewey's career, normative ethical theorizing was focused upon identification and justification of either a single moral principle or ranked series of moral principles for determining the morally right, best, or most virtuous solution to any apparent dilemma. Because Dewey's commitment to pluralism put him at odds with the goals of contemporary normative theorists, he did not engage in normative debates nor attempt to develop his own normative theory. But this does not mean that one cannot construct a pragmatic normative theory in keeping with Dewey's meta-ethics and moral psychology if certain caveats are carefully observed.

In contemporary terminology, Deweyan normative theorizing will be a form of pluralistic welfare consequentialism. But Dewey would not define "welfare" exclusively in terms of inner states such as pleasure or pain or the satisfaction of desire. Welfare, from a Deweyan perspective, would mean *faring well* over time in rising to the challenge of adapting ourselves and our ongoing projects to our ever-changing social and physical environments. Thus welfare is not an inner state we experience but is instead a *functional relationship* we maintain between our abilities, resources, and environment, on the one hand, and our interests, ends-in-view, habits, and desires, on the other. Given the facts of human physiology and psychology, certain objective and subjective conditions must be met if this functional relationship is to be maintained over time: (1) we must be able to avoid threats to our lives, our capacities, and to our access to those resources objectively necessary for faring well, including threats to our ability to sustain cooperative communities and the communal practices essential to distinctly human life, and (2) we must find ways of doing so that provide harmonious outlets for our habits and interests, tastes and desires.

From these general facts, we can generate a "thin," cross-cultural account of certain necessary constituents of welfare that may be used to evaluate practical deliberations both individual and collective. To determine what welfare in a specific social environment requires, we will have to go further, taking into account customary or traditional understandings that "thicken" the notions of good, right, and virtue that inform deliberations about personal and social welfare in different cultural contexts. Since real people always do operate within

specific cultural traditions, "thin" accounts will rarely provide sufficient criteria for any real person to determine how to act for the best. But they can provide useful criteria for determining which acts or choices are probably and/or defeasibly unwise or undesirable overall, whatever one's cultural tradition.

Judgments of or about the welfare of actual people always involve "thick" context-dependent concepts of good, right, and virtue that will vary from culture to culture. Moreover, as the necessary conditions of faring well over time differ so categorically from one another that they are neither interchangeable with nor reducible to one another (e.g. autonomy and rationality are not reducible to or interchangeable with sustenance or security), even the necessary constituents of human welfare will be irreducibly plural. The plurality of values has important implications for the conception of rational choice that pragmatic normative theorizing will employ. Specifically, pragmatic normative theorizing will eschew "maximizing" and "optimizing" conceptions in favor of a "*satisficing*" conception.[33] On the maximizing conception, decisions are rational if they maximize desired outcomes. But as we can only maximize for one outcome at a time, maximizing a plurality is impossible. On an optimizing conception, decisions are rational if they optimize a combination of desired outcomes. But we can optimize only if we have all the relevant information necessary for comparison of the future effects of our choices. In moral situations, however, we never possess the information required to optimize outcomes, partly because long-term effects of any act are hard to gauge, but mainly because the long-term binary effects of our choices upon ourselves make neutral, unbiased comparative assessment impossible. Moral choices *change agents* as well as their situations. Different choices result in different perspectives, and thus different experiences and values. To optimize in a moral situation, then, one would have to step out of one's actual perspective and enter into each of one's possible future perspectives, and then somehow compare these and their contents from some neutral, external standpoint. Since this is clearly impossible, it is unreasonable to expect moral choices to optimize values.

On a satisficing conception, however, any decision that yields acceptable results is rationally justifiable. Our strategy is to first establish minimum acceptable threshold levels for the diverse goods, rights, and/or virtues we wish to promote. Then using these

as criteria for evaluation, we review our options until we find one that satisfies them.[34] Any option that satisfies our minimum criteria is one we can reasonably adopt without further review of the alternatives. If time allows, we can continue our review as long as is practical, comparing our options for any additional advantages over and above the minimum necessary to resolve the problem at hand. If time does not allow, we need not view our truncated decision-making as necessarily rationally defective. Any choice is reasonable to the extent that it actually meets the needs of the situation we face. Thus many quite different solutions may all be equally reasonable on a satisficing conception.

Pragmatic normative theorizing will not offer principles specifying what is optimally best, right, or virtuous in a given situation, but rather principles that can help us to better determine where and how to set our minimum thresholds. It will be what Dewey calls an ameliorating normative theory, one that focuses primarily on helping us avoid evidently undesirable, wrong, or unwise choices without attempting to dictate what exactly our choices should be. As many of our commonsense moral principles are generally useful devices for identifying undesirable, wrong, or vicious acts and character traits, these will be used to determine whether and how far particular acts or traits are apt to help or hinder our efforts to reach minimum thresholds for human welfare – but with a critical eye to their practical consequences. Since most human beings on this planet are still unable to achieve and sustain even minimally satisfactory lives, pragmatic welfarism could contribute a great deal to contemporary moral and social debates.

NOTES

1. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1922), *MW* 14:228.
2. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 229.
3. See e.g. C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1944) and A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (Oxford: Gollancz, 1936). Emotivism was of course only one of several varieties of non-cognitivism current in the first half of the twentieth century. Prior to the appearance of emotivism in the 1930s, Dewey was already criticizing non-cognitivist theories of value in his exchanges with R. B. Perry and D. W. Prall in the *Journal of Philosophy* from 1915 through the 1920s.

4. On the "binary" character of practical judgment generally, see J. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice" (1915), *MW* 8:14–82, 17–19. On the form peculiar to moral practical judgments, see J. Dewey and J. H. Tufts, *Ethics*, 2nd edn (1932), *LW* 7:286–287.
5. This is sometimes called the problem of "amoralism." For a classic discussion in relation to internalism, see D. Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
6. Counterfactual judgments made in this way are sometimes called, following R. M. Hare, "inverted commas" moral judgments. See R. M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).
7. J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *LW* 4:224.
8. W. Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).
9. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 18–19, 163, 195.
10. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 26.
11. Dewey, "The Logic of Judgments of Practice," p. 24, and see D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2nd edn, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 415.
12. He goes on to say, "a mind or conscience or soul in general which performs these operations is a myth." See Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 123.
13. This should not be taken to mean that habits are a kind of mental machinery operating at odds with "free" or "voluntary" action. Unlike machines, we can evaluate and alter these mechanisms and so need not be constrained by them. Indeed, Dewey argues, free voluntary action is simply action directed by settled habits of reflection, foresight, and judgment.
14. J. Dewey, *Theory of Valuation* (1939), *LW* 13:215.
15. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 154.
16. Dewey, *Theory of Valuation*, p. 234.
17. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 209, and see J. Dewey, "Valuation and experimental knowledge" (1922), *MW* 13:14.
18. Dewey, *Theory of Valuation*, p. 231.
19. Dewey, *Theory of Valuation*, p. 232.
20. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 194.
21. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 218.
22. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 218.
23. This fact, for Dewey, weighs heavily in favor of liberal democracy as a basis for social institutions.
24. J. Dewey, "Three Independent Factors in Morals" (1930), *LW* 5:280, and see also Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, 2nd edn, pp. 308–309.

25. Dewey, "Three Independent Factors in Morals," p. 281.
26. It does mean, however, that practices failing to ensure each contributor receives some kind of benefit may become so undesirable for the excluded parties that they can no longer rationally endorse it – in which case its rules would cease to have any normative force for them.
27. Dewey, "Three Independent Factors in Morals," p. 285.
28. Dewey, "Three Independent Factors in Morals," p. 286.
29. Dewey, "Three Independent Factors in Morals," p. 287.
30. Dewey, "Three Independent Factors in Morals," p. 287.
31. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, 2nd edn, p. 280.
32. Thus one might hold that dishonesty is generally wrong or bad, but if one does so based on a sample that does not include cases where lying is necessary to save a life, one may reasonably refuse to consider it applicable in such cases.
33. The term was introduced by an economist, Herbert Simon. See his "A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 69 (1955), 99–118. For recent discussions of satisficing versus maximizing or optimizing, see Michael Byron, ed., *Satisficing and Maximizing: Moral Theorists on Practical Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
34. This does not mean there is no role for maximizing or optimizing rationality. We can maximize particular values in certain situations, especially non-moral ones, where it is possible to hold other values temporarily constant and then maximize one value within those limits. We can also optimize in situations, especially non-moral ones, where our sets of options differ in relatively few particulars, if all of the effects can be adequately predicted and none is apt to so alter the perspective of the agent choosing as to make it impossible to review each from a single, constant perspective. In the language of contemporary debate on this topic, we can maximize and optimize "locally" but not "globally."

JAMES BOHMAN

9 Ethics as moral inquiry: Dewey and the moral psychology of social reform

Because he consistently rejects the enterprise of traditional moral theory in its entirety, Dewey's own ethics is difficult to characterize. On the one hand, Dewey's endorsement of apparently theoretical statements, such as "judge an act by its consequences," seems to make him a consequentialist, although not necessarily a utilitarian. When Dewey applies this methodological adage to moral philosophy itself, he seeks to show that moral theories inherently justify social hierarchy by endorsing claims to special access to moral knowledge as a justification of class domination.[1] On the other hand, while Dewey unmasks moral philosophy as a means to social domination, he does not simply debunk moral knowledge as such. Instead he asks us to consider moral thinking and knowledge as empirical phenomena, to be understood primarily through social psychology and history. For this reason, when James Rachels wants to show the vitality of naturalism even after the challenge of Moore's naturalistic fallacy, he cites Dewey as the last "century's most influential naturalist."[2] In this respect, Dewey would clearly endorse naturalism as it is formulated by C. D. Broad: that "ethics is not an autonomous science," but rather "a department or an application of one or more of the natural or historical sciences."[3] Dewey's ethics is very much in the spirit of contemporary experimental philosophy. Indeed the purpose of Dewey's naturalistic ethics is not merely descriptive, but ameliorative: he seeks to improve moral judgments and make them suitable to the task of coming to terms with the new social circumstances of large-scale industrial society. This practical aim puts Dewey at odds with many, but not all, contemporary naturalists and marks something distinctive about Dewey's conception of ethics and empirical inquiry as a practical and ameliorative enterprise. Inquiry for Dewey

is inherently ameliorative because it occurs in the practical context of a "problematic situation," broadly understood: whether it be to resolve the personal conflicts between professional life and family obligations, reconcile a scientific theory with conflicting data, or to transform American agrarian and local political organization into one more appropriate to the demands of an "industrial nation that spanned an entire continent."

Much contemporary naturalism seeks to use empirical methods to undermine the "classical" conception of rationality and replace it with a more accurate picture of human capacities for reasoning. According to the classical conception, human beings are autonomous reasoners, for whom the laws of logic, statistics and probability theory are the laws of thought, as for example when decision theory holds that people have coherent and consistent sets of preferences. As the mounting experimental evidence reveals, it can be easily shown just how often human beings violate basic norms of reasoning, so that whole research programs have been based on showing just how little the empirical evidence supports such an inflated conception. Contemporary cognitive and social psychology sees its empirical task, more often than not, as replacing not only classical rationality with a more accurate assessment of the nature and limits of human reasoning. It also means ridding social psychological inquiry of normative conceptions as such and replacing them with descriptive and causal accounts that most people would find unrecognizable.

In Dewey's time, the debunking strategy, which contrasts the ideals of rationality with human weakness, was employed by social psychologists to argue for democratic realism: the limits of untutored human reasoning suggests that citizen participation should be kept to a minimum, and that reform based on the idea of instituting anything like participatory democracy was chimerical. Dewey's social and moral psychology offers a defense of democracy and of human rationality, even while rejecting strong versions of the classical conception of both. In good pragmatic fashion, Dewey develops his moral psychology not to underwrite a moral theory, but to understand the place of morality in human nature as realized in social life. As much as realists opposed democratic reform, the main aim of Dewey's moral psychology is to show why it is possible. Dewey seeks to get beyond the false dilemma of the two main

schools of social reform: *either* changing institutions requires first changing human sentiment, *or* changing human nature requires first changing institutions. The Deweyean alternative incorporates elements of both horns: all human conduct is first and foremost an interaction between elements of human nature and elements of the environment, natural, and social. "Progress proceeds in two ways, and that freedom is found in that kind of interaction which maintains an environment in which human desire and choice count for something."[4] The task of Dewey's moral theory is thus to provide an account of the practical basis for social change that will not only make democracy possible but also a continually improving practice. The debate between these two schools of reform goes on today. On the one hand, skeptics, especially those working in the heuristics and biases program that has dominated social psychology for decades, want to show just how irrational and prone to systematic error human beings really are. At the same time, moral inquiry into human social life has emerged in the form of applied social and cognitive psychology, whose aim it is to formulate an alternative conception of human rationality and to find ways to improve the social bases of human reasoning. This enterprise is naturalistic, normative and practical at the same time and captures the spirit of Dewey's linkage between the empirical examination of moral psychology for the purpose of social reform. In this chapter, I situate Dewey's moral psychology within this long debate and defend its spirit and overall aims, including its radical contextualism about moral judgments. Indeed, the insights of Dewey's practical and contextualist understanding of social psychology and the social sciences still illuminates these issues and helps us understand the conditions under which judgments of rationality are made. The merit of this Deweyean approach is that it shows how skeptics commit an inverted version of the naturalistic fallacy: since given the empirical evidence that human beings routinely and massively seem to violate rational norms under certain conditions, rationality cannot practically guide human reasoning and action. This claim is not only indefensible, but it ignores the possibilities of change and reform that Dewey's contextualist, situated, and interactive approach to an ameliorative social science of politics and morality seeks to make possible.

DEWEY'S EMPIRICAL ETHICS AND PROGRESSIVE NATURALISM

Others in this volume have dealt with Dewey's naturalism more generally. Mark Johnson argues that Dewey's theory of mind is naturalistic in the sense that it employs empirical research in the human sciences, non-reductive to the extent that no science tells the complete story, and process-oriented to the extent that it is based on the idea of the interaction between the organism and its social and natural environment.[5] Naturalism in ethics is based on the same commitments. Often this means that there are "natural" properties that are identical with "moral" properties, such as that the good is the satisfaction of "interests." For example, Mill claimed that "the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people actually do desire it." Mill is here not offering a definition of desirability but is rather, as Rachels puts it, "expressing the basic naturalistic idea that desirability is an empirical matter."[6] As Dewey makes clear in his criticisms of utilitarianism as a moral theory, desirability is normative rather than a purely subjective or objective property. Thus, any view is reductionist if it cannot capture this type of co-constitution, the interplay of subjective and objective features of the particular situation. The task of moral inquiry is to test both the objective and the subjective features that make it an act of valuing. Dewey defended a naturalistic interpretation of morality in *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922) and later in *A Theory of Valuation* (1939), both of which aim at a normative account of human conduct that is able to guide and improve intelligent decision-making. Dewey believes that only a naturalistic ethics can perform its dual practical function of guiding conduct and reforming the social world.

Dewey gave his first synthetic work in ethics, *Human Nature and Conduct*, a perhaps surprisingly naturalistic subtitle: *An Introduction to Social Psychology*. But this subtitle suggests two quite different sources of reductionism: traditional moral theory with its attempt to identify external standards and ultimate criteria for human judgment, and the opposite extreme of an individualistic moral psychology that focuses on the deficits of human rationality to such a degree that explanations of human behavior refer to causes of behavior rather than norms. Dewey saw the psychological

research of his day as impoverished by a methodological shift from "rational to irrational forms of motivation," and thus a greater emphasis on "instinctual" and "causal" explanation, such as antecedent drives and conditioning. Such explanations discounted the explanatory role not only of norms of rationality, but of future orientation of judgements about the applicability of norms as such. While inherently a normative enterprise, traditional moral theories provided no alternative; with their emphasis on fixed ends and dogmatic supreme principles they could not deal with the kinds of conflicts that emerge with the new and ever changing circumstances of modern social life. Indeed, moral philosophy, Dewey argued, has been primarily concerned with the "control of human nature" instead of awakening it through "an active response" to various norms and ideals.[7] Rather than search for a theory that provides the foundations for morality once and for all, a naturalistic account takes morality to function in a social context as a means to coordinate the judgments, sentiments, and behavior of people together living in various groups and governing themselves through institutions. Such a mode of life could flourish only by improving human capacities for reasoning and judgment.

Given these goals it is perhaps surprising that Dewey begins his foreword to the 1930 edition of *Human Nature and Conduct* lauding Hume as a methodological predecessor to his own sort of naturalistic ethics (while in no way accepting Hume's belief/desire psychology). Having been the first to emphasize the universal features of human nature within the variety of social circumstances, Hume properly "saw the part played by the structure and operations of our common human nature in shaping social life."[8] Thus, Dewey can fully endorse Hume's criticisms of a non-empirical ethics that did not comprehend "the presence of facts in which human nature is central." Hume's insistence on an empirical component to ethics makes him perhaps the first truly modern naturalist, informing not only skepticism but also the consequences of various moral customs and institutions. At the same time, Hume saw only a single direction of causality and did not see "with equal clearness the reflex influence" of social life and institutions in shaping human nature, by which human nature is as much shaped by institutions as institutions are by it. As Dewey puts it, "all conduct is interaction between elements of human nature and the environment, natural and social," so that freedom for Dewey

simply consists of "that kind of interaction which maintains an environment in which desire and choice count for something" and thus are responsive to human choice and deliberation.[9] Seen in this way, the possibility of change is not found within personality alone, but is instead primarily "an engineering problem," a problem of constructing the right kind of interaction to produce such a virtuous and reflexive feedback relationship between individuals, customs, and institutions. This kind of dynamic feedback or reflexivity is a central feature responsible for the justified hope of improving institutions at the same time as improving judgments, and vice versa.

It is with respect then to possibilities of dynamic change and reform that Dewey's ethical naturalism gets its explanatory traction. Neither change within each individual person, nor change within institutions alone is sufficient for social reform. This interactive view holds for the three basic categories of his social psychology: impulses, desires, and habits. On Dewey's view, impulses are the "affective-motor" sources of human activity, in which we might include drives and instincts; desires are by contrast cognitive states, oriented to particular ends. If we think of the example of hunger and food, it is clear that impulses remain plastic, subject to a great deal of social variation due to habitual social practice. Thus, habits form the core of Dewey's naturalistic social psychology. Rather than routinized behavior, Dewey sees habits as projective and dynamic, as "ways or modes of response," that are as much "the functions of the surroundings as truly as they are of persons."[10] Thus, Dewey's interactive account is naturalistic without being individualist; it does not see habits such as rationality as simply properties of individual persons, but as specifying the appropriate environment (including the habits and dispositions of other agents) in which they can be exercised. Conflict among habits is the spur to reform, as when our political habits come into conflict with "the habits that dominate friendly discourse, science and art," so that these habits now can become the basis for intelligent reform and make possible the transformation of "elements of disintegration into a constructive synthesis."[11] This requires flexible, open and creative dispositions, something that allows people to act within changing environments and institutions, a process which is always a highly contextual exercise, more like jazz improvisation than following fixed rules of harmony.

Dewey considers a wide variety of modes of action and response to be habits, including virtues and vices, crafts and arts, language, and other forms of shared conduct. Habits are not means to various ends but constitutive of the self within the social environment. Habits "form our effective desires, and they furnish us with our working capacities."[12] Given their functional role, habits cannot be changed directly by some act of the will; they can only be changed by changing the environment and objective conditions in which they operate. We change habits, Dewey argues, indirectly by modifying conditions, but also by deliberation, "an intelligent selecting and weighting of the objects which engage attention and which influence the fulfillment of desires."[13] Constant transformation and flexibility is built into our moral psychology, and institutional arrangements such as democracy become the means by which judgments about better or worse reorganization of the social world occur. Such institutions will of course rely on and create the objective conditions for different habits – the habits of intelligence: "Concrete habits do all the perceiving, recognizing, imagining, recalling, judging, conceiving and reasoning that is done."[14] Thus, the main task of deliberate reform is to transform routine, unintelligent habit into "intelligent habit or art."

It is important to note that deliberation here is not a matter of introspection or a special property of consciousness, but the *active* engagement with the world. There is no way to reflect on possibilities and ends-in-view except through inquiry, to test them in the world. Dewey thus rejects the idea that people deliberate in some way to adopt the point of view of one's true self; rather, deliberation leaves one's desires, plans, conflicting attitudes, character, and actual situation intact. For Kantians such as Korsgaard, deliberation is based instead upon the "reflective structure of human consciousness," which allows us to separate ourselves from our dispositions and the current situation and thus able to adopt an independent standpoint that makes such impulses and desire "material upon which the active will operates."[15] But as Blackburn points out in defense of Hume's naturalism, this kind of control does not reflect the process of deliberation of actual persons: "Typically, in deliberation I pay attention to features of the external world," such as costs, consequences, interpersonal relationships, and other facts about the situation.[16] A desire is not an internal state but found in aspects of the situation that are experienced as attractive or affective. In Simon Blackburn's terms,

the naturalist does not require an "inner deliberator." Dewey thus shares with Hume a particular conception of the deliberative stance as active and worldly.

Where do reformers stand in this particular social and moral psychology? Dewey provides an account of the emergence of reformers that is consistent with his overall picture of intelligence as a form of habituation. First, the emergence of impulses when there is a "breach in the cake of custom" becomes a spur to the reorganization of habit, even if it is "the work of intelligence to find ways to use them."[17] This task of intelligence is often exercised by social reformers, but can also simply be the result of the power of common deliberation as the basis for a flexible, adaptive response to a novel situation. Here, "the disposition to deliberation is a custom capable of exercising the most revolutionary influence on other customs."[18] In this case, institutions build intelligent habit into their normative infrastructure. Thus, reformers should promote the capacity for deliberation, so that democracy becomes "a means for stimulating original thought, and of evoking action deliberately adjusted to cope with new forces," even if it does not always do so.[19] Against the realists and skeptics of his day, Dewey's naturalist defense of the capacity to deliberate made it plausible that ordinary citizens, with the proper education and institutionally organized context of deliberation, could initiate institutional reform. The intelligent restructuring of habit by intelligent dispositions is not only possible, but creates a kind of virtuous circle: the more deliberative capacity is promoted, the more it can be realized institutionally; the more it is realized institutionally, the more the social environment is responsive to desires and choice.

Dewey's naturalistic social psychology was criticized from all sides. Its treatment of impulse was considered naïve by Freudians and others who believed in irrepressible instincts, and by skeptical realists such as Walter Lippmann and others, who insisted human irrationality was too prevalent to think that government by the people was a realistic alternative. Such challenges continue today in the form of skeptical social psychology and cognitive science, which often extend skepticism about classical rationality to skepticism about all effective social norms as such. In the next section, I offer Deweyean criticisms of this social psychological framework, embodied most strikingly today in the "heuristics and biases" research program begun by Kahneman and Tversky. Very much in the

Deweyean spirit, other social psychologists reject such skepticism and instead ask how it is that research into cognitive capacities can improve moral and political judgment and enable social reform. Others study the concrete circumstances of various forms of deliberation with an eye to creating better and more deliberative institutions. As in Dewey's time, a similar pattern of empiricist skepticism and normative naturalist response emerges surrounding the possibility of making democracy more deliberative. Indeed, Dewey's pragmatic moral psychology is the intellectual progenitor of these reformist approaches.

AMELIORATIVE VERSUS SKEPTICAL MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

As should be apparent from his moral psychology, Dewey's naturalism does not attempt to redescribe moral and epistemic norms in purely descriptive or causal terms. If there are social norms, for Dewey they represent a distinctive type of observable fact. For this reason Dewey often criticizes appeals to some "moral ideal," as disconnected from "the ordinary actualities of humanity."[20] Nonetheless, Dewey does not reject ideals (or any other kind of norm) when they are appropriately contextualized within human activity. Democracy is an "ideal of social life" and as such extends beyond the question of the proper form of government. As an ideal, it "serves as a basis for criticism of institutions as they exist and of plans of betterment."[21] Thus, the normative status of ideals such as that of democracy is to be understood in the context of ongoing attempts to realize them under changing conditions. In much the same way that mind/body dualism leads to a mistaken view of moral life, a decontextualized conception of the ideal of democracy introduced a pernicious and dogmatic form of dualism that does not recognize how the ideal of democracy changes as it is realized under new circumstances.

Central to any program of reform that emphasizes interaction within democratic institutions is the idea that human capacities of judgment and deliberation are sufficient for the task of improving democratic practice. Dewey's epistemology is fundamentally populist, in the sense that under the right conditions ordinary citizens are as capable of making as good a judgment as experts and other elites, if not better. At the same time, Dewey recognizes that any given time

interactions between institutions and individuals may not promote good deliberation. The issue with skeptical naturalists is not whether or not existing forms of deliberation are defective, but whether or not they can be improved. Thus, the challenge that Dewey faced already in his own time in the social psychology of Walter Lippmann and others is twofold. First, Lippmann and some contemporary social psychologists claim not only that human reasoning tends to be biased, but also that this very fact undermines the epistemic populism or egalitarianism that makes democracy plausible. Second, if tendencies to violate ideal rationality are universal and innate, then the practical hope of improving human judgment and of eliminating biases is chimerical. Such skeptical claims are still commonplace among naturalized social psychology of human reasoning, especially with the dominance of the "biases and heuristics" research program in the study of human cognition.[22]

How does Dewey think it is possible to answer such skeptics about human rationality and deliberative capacity? Certainly, Dewey would see this as an empirical question and thus as a matter for inquiry. However, the key to the validation of human intelligence is not to develop the proper general norm or conception of rationality, but rather context sensitivity, a feature that Dewey identified as lacking in moral theories and necessary for all attempts to improve moral judgment. This sort of agent-centered research overlooks practical implications of those contexts and conditions that promote rational rather than irrational decision-making. Thus, experimental cognitive psychology could take a Deweyean turn and attempt to promote and facilitate rational and non-biased judgment, as well as showing the ways in which judgments under less than perfect conditions can be "debiased" and improved. If rationality is conditional upon features of the context, then so is irrationality.

Consider Kahneman and Tversky's claim that their research on biases in human judgment challenges "the descriptive adequacy of rational models of judgment and decision-making."[23] This kind of research program required a particular methodological focus, "on errors and the role of judgment biases," often with regard to statistical and logical reasoning.[24] The important methodological counterattack to such experimental claims challenges the supposed ubiquity of biases on the basis of such purely experimental data; if they are not overgeneralized, then they are highly context-specific and do not

show an inherent or general irrationality. In a similar vein one could also inquire into "the conditions under which heuristics are valid" and to discover those conditions under which "a bias fails" with "the result of improving cognition."[25]

Psychologists who engage in research with this ameliorative and practical aim call their normative conception of social research "applied cognitive psychology" (or ACP). ACP is a program consistent with the tenets of non-reductive naturalism insofar as it seeks not only debiasing, but also the practical goal of promoting norms of rationality in various decision-making procedures. In the case of the conjunction fallacy that Kahneman and Tversky found to be common in reasoning,[26] Gigerenzer showed that it is possible for people to conform to the conjunction axiom, and the task is "debiased" and performance greatly improved if the probabilities were expressed as frequencies. If this is the case, intelligent reasoners will be bad at those judgments that lack the specificity and features of a problematic situation, in which the description of the problem is open to revision along with proposed solutions. Thus, Dewey's contextualism takes people to be reasoners who determine standards of correctness within particular situations. Practical moral thinking and judgment is always in interaction with a specific situation and social environment, and this ecological constraint should also extend to experimental methods as well. Such results show the way in which a methodology sensitive to context specificity can demonstrate the way in which judgments of rationality and irrationality are not global, but can only be made in specific contexts of reasoning, including contexts in which subjects do the tasks particularly well. Moving away from global assessments of human rationality, this sort of ameliorative psychological and social science is still naturalistic in the same sense that Dewey demanded: that such normative evaluations and proposals are themselves subject to experimental testing and contextual evaluation.

Even while it captures the pragmatist conception of the goal of inquiry into cognitive processes, ACP may seem to give too much importance to the norm of rationality in comparison with Dewey's ethical naturalism. Here Dewey is a more radical contextualist, including rejecting the idea of given standards of correctness and insisting that they only be fixed contextually. Despite his clearly normative conception of reason, Dewey thoroughly naturalizes it in

a Humean way, saying that in fact "we do not act *from* reasoning" as source of ends.[27] As beings that he admits are "always biased," we act out of deliberate choice only "when we want incompatible things" and thus are forced to choose among them. In such cases, Dewey defines rationality in terms of the outcome of deliberation, the creation of a unified preference out of competing preferences.[28] Reason is not opposed to impulse, habit or desire; rather, reason aims at "a happy cooperation of a multitude of dispositions, such as sympathy, curiosity, exploration, experimentation, frankness, pursuit (to follow them through), circumspection (to look at the context, etc.)."[29] The result is that reason or the rational attitude is never simply a "ready-made antecedent," but rather an outcome, the "resulting disposition."[30] As an achievement term, rationality broadens rather than narrows one's life with the constant potential problem of the need for integration, often by transforming habits and accommodating impulses into an organization of various competing dispositions. For Dewey, rationality as such is not the standard, but the achievement of any one of contextually appropriate outcomes that unify the particular problematic situation. In advance of inquiry, we cannot know what the consequences are, much less the way to produce the best ones.

Conceptions of ecological rationality developed in ACP might prove useful confirmations of Dewey's interactive and contextual moral and political psychology. According to Goldstein and Gigerenzer, a heuristic is ecologically rational if it "exploits information structures in the environment, "even when time and knowledge are limited, so as to be "powerful enough to model both good and poor reasoning."[31] Lippmann charged that the democratic ideal espoused by Dewey and other participatory democrats was too demanding and required "omnicompetent citizens." Omnicompetent citizens would be fully informed reasoners; in a word, they would be classically rational and equipped with a store of expert knowledge across many domains. However, in an institutionally responsive environment, "recognition heuristics" afford people resources to deliberate even without fulfilling these demanding requirements. As Arthur Lupia shows,[32] voters may correctly use party affiliation as providing just such an ecological correlation to various political beliefs, in order to decide whom to vote for in the absence of further information. Thus, changing or controlling the environment makes people smarter

without overburdening citizens. Skeptics such as Lippmann are answered not by appeal to some inherent or populist norm of rationality, but by facts about how institutions can be so structured as to promote environments for good, but frugal decision-making.

Dewey's thoroughgoing contextualism is thus the solution to a number of skeptical difficulties of moral philosophy understood as a theoretical rather than a practical enterprise. Improvements to human judgment are an institutional task, and moral inquiry aims not only to reach the appropriate sort of unity among conflicting claims, but also to engage in moral inquiry to the various sources of such problematic situations, including various failures of rationality and biases. Such inquiry is not a matter of experts or social scientists, however important such social science may be. Rather it is a product of the deliberation of moral agents, particularly in their role as citizens. Dewey's naturalism provides a defense of the claim that the deliberation of all those affected by a decision would be superior to any other possible method of inquiry. An interactive or ecological approach to such issues already provides some defense of such a claim, to the extent that it says that such a procedure would be the best only if certain social or environmental conditions are met. Next I consider some of the burgeoning social psychological literature on public deliberation in order to assess Dewey's instrumental justification of intelligent deliberation as the best means to transform problematic situations.

DELIBERATION, INQUIRY, AND PROBLEMATIC SITUATIONS

Thus far, I have discussed Dewey's naturalism in broadly individualist terms, where an individual with impulses, desires, and habits faces a problematic situation of choice in a social environment. In this respect, Dewey was concerned to defend social individuals from skeptical realist charges that their behavior was instinctual and irrational. In order to resist the claim that deliberative institutions stand or fall with the capacities of individuals, Dewey argued that "it is not an ethical ought that conduct should be social; it is social, whether good or bad."[33] And as we have seen, settled habits are not just in the head but are part of the general social environment with which people interact. Dewey's naturalism leads him to emphasize the functional role of institutions, political or otherwise, through which inquiry into

problematic situations becomes socialized and regularized. Put in Aristotelian terms, this kind of practical inquiry was not a matter of *techne*, but of *praxis*. Understood in this way, practice is the process of the development of "experimental intelligence" that is based on "the ability of human experience to generate the aims and methods by which further experience will grow in ordered richness."[34] This naturalism about moral and social inquiry defines it in terms of its end, a particular kind of ordering of experience, where the resolution of a conflict is not simply the choice of one end or another, but the increased awareness of the possibility of their unity in a properly ordered social world. If indeed all cooperative activities "involve a moment of inquiry," then they also need a moment of self-reflection on the assumptions of such inquiry itself.[35] Central to the ameliorative project of Dewey's ethical naturalism is then the improvement of these moments of inquiry in cooperative practices. One way to improve them is to determine the objective conditions and social environments in which cooperative deliberation is more likely to succeed. The other way for it to succeed is for participants and reformers to gain greater empirical knowledge of how such practices work and how they might be regulated to promote proper inquiry. It is distinctive of Dewey's naturalism that irreducibly empirical questions are part of such inquiry, including empirical questions about the nature of moral inquiry itself.

A practice with the end of cooperation aims at the realization of various norms and ideals. While Dewey expresses suspicion about usefulness of the "ideal" as a category, it is appropriate to say that democratic inquiry aims at realizing the democratic ideal, where an ideal is some guiding norm or set of norms that could be realized in a variety of ways. Naturalism rejects the conception of ideals that is emphasized in traditional moral theory, where they are seen as fixed ends or standards, whose validity is independent of changing circumstances and "isolated from those conditions that gave them their standing and significance."[36] In isolation from the means by which they achieved their consequences, ideals become external standards rather than "the generalized result" of deliberation. If appropriately contextualized, genuine ideals have a "limiting and directive force" in practice. So naturalized and contextualized, ideals serve as generalized instruments whose meaning is determined by their further use, "all the while being clarified and modified by this use." For Dewey,

truth is directive of scientific inquiry in this sense, even if it is not fixed and must necessarily be modified as practices change, as has occurred with the development of modern science. The same is true for democracy, which is as much an ideal modified in use as it is a description of objective arrangements oriented to realizing self-rule. Inquiry is itself guided by ideals which are then modified and developed reflexively by this use. Central to contextual moral inquiry is in fact just these interactive and mutually conditioning relations, including broadly dialectical relationships between ideals and circumstances and between means and ends. When understood in institutional terms, such interactions are the primary means for social improvement, as directive ideals are realized in more feasible, apt, and creative institutions. Such improvement can only be achieved through inquiry and deliberation about mutually determining means and ends, circumstances and ideals.

In this regard, any political ideal must take into account general social facts if it is to be feasible; but it must also be able to respond to a series of social facts that ground skeptical challenges, suggesting that circumstances make such an ideal impossible. With respect to democracy, these facts include expertise and the division of labor, cultural pluralism and conflict, social complexity and differentiation, as well as the fact of globalization and the fact of increasing social interdependence, to name a few that Dewey made central to *The Public and its Problems*. In cases where "facts" challenge the very institutional basis of modern political integration, normative practical inquiry must seek to extend the scope of political possibilities rather than simply accept the facts and the institutions that produce and stabilize them as fixing the limits of political possibilities once and for all. For this reason, social science is practical to the extent that it is able to show how political ideals that have informed the institutions in question are not only still possible, but also feasible under current conditions or modification of those conditions. The ideal in question for a social theory inspired by pragmatism is a robust and deliberative form of self-rule – also a key aspect of the wider historical project of the development of human powers and capabilities for freedom. Here the broad analysis of the main structural features takes on a critical and practical turn when considering the transformation of democracy under new circumstances. Dewey suggests that observable facts of inquiry should play a practical role: "facts are

such in a logical sense only as they serve to delimit a problem in a way that affords indication and test of proposed solutions."[37] They may serve this practical role not only in terms of testing observable consequences but also seeing how such consequences revise our understanding of the ideals that guide the practices in which such problems emerge – thus where neither fact nor ideal is fixed and neither is given *ex ante* justificatory or theoretical priority.

The debate between Dewey and Lippmann about the public sphere and its role in democracy offers a good example of critical and practical social inquiry concerning social facts. In response to Lippmann's insistence on the preeminence of expertise, Dewey criticized "existing political practice," including its exclusion of the occupational and epistemic division of labor. At the same time, he recognized that existing institutions were obstacles to the emergence of such a form of participatory democracy and thus saw the solution in a transformation both of what it is to be a public and of the institutions with which the public interacts. Such interaction will provide the basis for determining how the functions of the new form of political organization will be limited and expanded, the scope of which is "something to be critically and experimentally determined" in democracy as a mode of practical inquiry. The question is not just one of current political feasibility, but also of possibility, given that we want to remain committed in some broad sense to democratic principles of self-rule even if not to the set of possibilities provided by current institutions. Democracy is also a means to various ends, under changing circumstances. For some, the emergence of moral and epistemic pluralism is an impediment to the realization of democracy because of this potential for conflict. But such diversity can also be seen as a means to the end of improving democratic judgment, particularly in light of problematic heuristics that we discussed in the previous section.

This pragmatic approach allows us to conceive of these "facts" of modern societies as practical: they are precisely those determinations that are embedded in relatively long-term social processes, whose consequences cannot be reversed in a relatively short period of time – such as a generation – by political action. Practical theories thus have to consider the ways in which such facts become part of a constructive process that might be called "generative entrenchment."[38] By "entrenchment of social facts," I mean that the relevant

democratic institutions promote the very conditions that make these institutional social facts possible. When the processes at work in maintaining the social fact then begin to outstrip particular institutional feedback mechanisms that maintain it within the institution, then the institution must be transformed if it is to stand in the appropriate relation to the new facts about the social that it generates and realizes.

In some cases democracy may be a means rather than an end. Consider problems for democratic self-rule raised by the "heuristics and biases" that are putative facts about common human reasoning. From a pragmatic perspective these claims ignore certain resources inherent in democratic practice. There is strong empirical evidence that deliberation under conditions of epistemic diversity corrects for various weaknesses in rationality. For example, Druckman has examined the influence of deliberation on framing effects and the structuration of preference. The evidences shows that those "individuals who engage in conversations with a heterogeneous group will be less susceptible to framing effects than those who do not" engage in such conversations.[39] Evidence also suggests that after such deliberation participants are more likely to diverge from their initial opinions and to have a clearer definition of the issues. As a paradigmatic instance of Deweyean social research, such empirical research could, as Thompson argues, examine the conditions under which "deliberation does or does not work well, while paying more attention to the question of to what extent the unfavorable conditions could change."[40]

One related condition that tends to improve deliberation is epistemic diversity and the social division of labor, which as social facts ought to be regarded as resources rather than constraints on good deliberation.[41] With regard to effectiveness, it could also be argued that such correction occurred in the early days of the HIV epidemic when patients had no say about the regime for testing experimental drugs. In deliberation that included the perspectives of patients (who also make up the pool of participants in tests and as such must restrict their use of other possible remedies), doctors, researchers, and policymakers, ideal standards of validity were balanced with other values such as quicker availability of drugs, safety, and effectiveness. In a similar case, Bina Argarwal has studied the effects of the exclusion of the perspective of women from deliberation on community forestry

groups in India and Nepal.[42] Because women had primary responsibility for wood-gathering, they possessed greater knowledge of sustainable gathering practices. At the same time, when groups are polarized, this fact may inhibit good deliberation.[43]

But what then is deliberation on a naturalistic account? Dewey often suggests that deliberation ought to be assessed empirically and the only way to do so is instrumentally, as a means to achieving good decisions. We saw earlier that deliberation occurs in a problematic situation, the resolution to which is achieved in instituting a new situation with an "ordered richness," or a "complete situation with an integrated set of conditions." It aims broadly at a "satisfying condition" that overcomes what is lacking in the situations through weighing "ends-in-view in their function as a means." Thus, deliberation is made empirical by seeing it as a means to a particular overall end, of resolving a problematic situation; for Dewey this is true for all inquiry, so that the worth of the conclusion is established "on the ground of its ability to resolve the problem presented by the conditions under investigation."[44] One mark of Dewey's contextualism is that no feature of this process is regarded as fixed, neither the definition of the problem, nor the solution to the problem; neither the means nor the end. All of them are reciprocally determined and tested, so that if a solution fails, say lowering taxes as a means of stimulating growth, then the definition of the problem could be rethought. This idea of reciprocal determination makes it misleading to call Dewey an instrumentalist about practical reasoning; here, too, it is better to say that it is part of his commitment to empirical methodology that leads him to this standard of evaluation, where determining the means lets us evaluate the end and each achieved end must also be seen in its role as a means; moreover, conceptions of the end of inquiry as "an ordered richness" or "an integrated set of conditions" hardly describe something that can be thought of as an end independent of inquiry within a particular context and situation.[45] Such openness raises the stakes of inquiry: having set out to resolve a particular problematic situation we may end up redefining and transforming it; inquiry is creative, so that its limits are not set by some standard or authority external to it, but open to real novelty as the best solution to a problem.

In his *Ethics*, Dewey extends this line of reasoning in describing democracy as a "moral ideal," which would unite individuality with

the common good through cooperative deliberation and activity.[46] His description of democracy in these terms is yet another instance of mutual determination and interaction, here of the individual and the social as well as the moral and the institutional. The general well-being, Dewey argues, is not possible without "the full development of individuals into their distinctive individuality"; it is also true that when individuals have "initiative, independence of judgment, flexibility, fullness of experience," they will also be able to act in such a way as to enrich the lives of others and contribute to the common good. Here the antinomy of individual freedom and of the common good is made a matter of mutual determination under the proper institutional conditions. In *The Public and its Problems*, Dewey makes such a process dynamic. Dewey sees the normal, problem-solving functioning of democratic institutions as based on robust interaction between publics and institutions within a set of constrained alternatives. When the institutional alternatives implicitly address a different public than is currently constituted by evolving institutional practice and its consequences, the public may act indirectly and self-referentially by forming a new public with which the institutions must interact. Such interaction initiates a process of democratic renewal in which publics organize and are organized by new emerging institutions with a different alternative set of political possibilities as a new political form. This is a difficult process: "to form itself the public has to break existing political forms; this is hard to do because these forms are themselves the regular means for instituting political change."[47] Mutual determination thus provides a description of a pervasive feedback mechanism in social life that constitutes a naturalistic explanation of the emergence of new normative orders. For this reason George Herbert Mead called democracy the institutionalization of revolution, which Dewey takes to be the institutionalization of the experimental method open to the prospect of constant novelty.[48]

This idea of mutual determination is thus at the core of Dewey's ethical naturalism, as is evidenced not only in his discussion of morality and problem-solving but also in his naturalistic account of freedom. The sort of social freedom that has been esteemed and fought for in human history "has never been the metaphysical freedom of the will."[49] It is not the freedom of disconnected individuals apart from the world, but freedom "in and among real events" with

the exercise of real powers and capacities to affect the environment.[50] Freedom then requires that desire and choice be causal forces in the world, capable of influencing future possibilities in an open world, in which deliberation has control over future possibilities. "The question is not what the antecedents of deliberation are, but what are its consequences?"[51] This kind of efficacy or control is had only in a properly organized social environment, where organization and institutions permit this sort of joint exercise of human capacities. Even if education is an essential part of Dewey's program of social reform, its purpose is neither to impart theoretical reasoning nor to make each citizen a self-sufficient and autonomous reasoner, informed by explicit theoretical knowledge of inference-making. Rather, it is to introduce intelligent habits of inquiry that make citizens flexible and responsive to changing social circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Dewey's moral philosophy is sophisticated and multilevel, and there is clear interaction between the highest level of practices and institutions and lower-level psychological dispositions, impulses, and habits. It is non-reductive because it is not committed to any particular metaphysics or single level of explanation, including the now predominant forms of descriptive individualism which sees morality in terms of the internal structure of individuals. Rather, because morality is social, "the facts upon which it depends are those which arise out of active connections of human beings with one another, the consequences of their mutually intertwined activities of the life of desire, judgment, satisfaction and dissatisfaction."[52] These connections ground morality contextually in the specific concrete actualities and historical realities in which moral action takes place. This grounding is empirical and practical, not metaphysical. Indeed, Dewey sees metaphysically grounded moralities as inherently dogmatic and authoritarian.[53] Even with its emphasis on human reasoning exercised in specific social environments and contexts, Dewey's ethics is also clearly a normative enterprise, even if various kinds of natural, social, and historical facts play a role in forming and framing human judgments. Furthermore, it is methodologically naturalistic in proposing a broadly scientific and experimental form of inquiry as

the basis for ethical deliberation. In this way, Dewey sought to change various objective and institutional conditions in order to promote better democratic practice. His moral psychology of habits shows how such progress is possible on the basis of fairly minimal psychological assumptions about human reasoning and on the capacity to identify and institutionalize various objective conditions, including epistemic diversity as a key component of a social environment that makes people less susceptible to various errors and biases that undermine the positive feedback mechanisms necessary for good deliberative practice.

Not surprisingly for a philosopher who sees such a strong role for empirical inquiry in normative moral psychology, Dewey is a thoroughgoing contextualist. Moral theory too often skips inquiry and relies on general principles or intrinsic goods. Dewey rejects the standard conception of instrumental reasoning, which takes ends to be fixed or given by our desires. At the same time, Dewey also rejects all arguments for some final end, naturalistic or otherwise, such as happiness or the fulfillment of human nature, since all such judgments are made abstractly and independently from all actual contexts of practical reasoning. Dewey instead argues for the reciprocal determination of means and ends, normative ideals and concrete social conditions. His basic unit of analysis is the exercise of human capacities and powers within a particular problematic situation to be resolved. In this respect, democracy establishes the proper methods of collective reasoning along with the institutions that create the appropriate environment for testing and revision. It does so without stipulating what the proper standards or aims ought to be in advance. Since values and ends cannot be ordered once and for all, deliberative inquiry "needs to be done over and over again, in terms of the conditions of concrete situations as they arise."[54] Such inquiry is not caught in a vicious circle, but on a virtuous "spiral," in which social customs generate some consciousness of interdependence, which is then "embodied in acts which in improving the environment generate new perceptions and new social ties, and so on forever."[55] Dewey's moral hope is that at a certain point this reflexive process of growth and development, for all its "admixture of the accidental and the reasonable," will permit the emergence of a thriving community capable of a cooperative social life guided by the goods of inquiry.

NOTES

1. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922) *MW* 14:4.
2. J. Rachels, "Naturalism," in *The Blackwell Guide to Ethical Theory*, ed. H. LaFollette (London: Blackwell, 2000), p. 75.
3. C. D. Broad, "Some of the Main Problems of Ethics," *Philosophy* 31 (1946), 193.
4. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1922) *MW* 14:9.
5. See M. Johnson's chapter in this volume.
6. Rachels, "Naturalism," p. 75.
7. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 5–6.
8. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 228.
9. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 9.
10. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 12.
11. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 54.
12. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 20.
13. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 18.
14. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 124.
15. C. Korsgaard, *Sources of Normativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 92–93. For the Humean position, see S. Blackburn, *Ruling Passions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), chapter 8.
16. Blackburn, *Ruling Passions*, pp. 253–254.
17. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 119.
18. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 56.
19. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 48.
20. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 8.
21. J. Dewey, *Ethics* (1932), *LW* 7:349.
22. C. Lee, "Applied Cognitive Psychology and the Strong Replacement of Epistemology by Normative Psychology," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 38 (2007), 55–75.
23. D. Kahneman and A. Tversky, "On the Study of Statistical Intuitions," in *Judgment under Uncertainty*, ed. D. Kahneman, P. Slovic, and A. Tversky (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 494.
24. Lee, "Applied Cognitive Psychology," 58–59.
25. See B. Fischhoff, "Debiasing," in *Judgment under Uncertainty*, p. 423.
26. A conjunction fallacy is a common error in probabilistic reasoning. For example, when people are asked whether it is more probable that "Linda" is a bank teller or that Linda is a bank teller and a member of the feminist movement, people choose the latter. But the probability of two events occurring together is always less than any one of them occurring alone.
27. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 119.

28. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 134.
29. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 136.
30. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 136.
31. M. Goldstein and G. Gigerenzer, "Models of Ecological Rationality: The Recognition Heuristic," *Psychological Review* 100 (1993), 75.
32. Arthur Lupia and Matthew McCubbins, *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn what they Need to Know?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
33. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 16–17.
34. See, for example, J. Dewey, "Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us" (1939), *LW* 14:229; or, more generally, J. Dewey. *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *MW* 12:172–186.
35. H. Putnam, *Words and Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 174.
36. J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *LW* 12:79.
37. Dewey, *Logic*, p. 499.
38. W. Wimstatt, "Complexity and Organization," *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Science Association*, ed. R. S. Cohen (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1974), pp. 967–986.
39. J. N. Druckman, "Political Preference Formation," *American Political Science Review* 98 (2004), 675.
40. D. Thompson, "Deliberative Democracy and Empirical Social Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008), 500.
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50. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 209–210.
51. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 214.
52. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 300.
53. Dewey, *Ethics*, p. 219.
54. Dewey. *Ethics*, p. 212.
55. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 225.

SAMI PIHLSTRÖM

10 Dewey and pragmatic religious naturalism

John Dewey is often regarded as a purely secular thinker, a "naturalist" and "humanist." In most commentaries, Dewey's pragmatism, including his moral, social, and educational thought, is barely, if at all, connected with his views on religion,[1] in contrast to another classical pragmatist, William James, whose explorations of religious themes, emphasizing the value of individual believers' experiential perspectives, continuously attract scholars' attention.[2] This chapter, however, discusses the socially oriented, *pragmatically naturalist* conception of religious faith Dewey developed in *A Common Faith*[3] and elsewhere, as well as Dewey's influence on pragmatically naturalist currents in the philosophy of religion.[4] In particular, Dewey's distinction between "the religious," on the one side, and actual religions, on the other, is emphasized. According to Dewey, the religious aspects of experience can be appreciated without metaphysical commitments to anything supernatural. Here a problem arises: can the religious qualities of experience be fully naturalized by understanding them in a Deweyan manner as imaginative relations to human ideals, or will such naturalization inevitably reduce religious experience to something else?

Dewey's pragmatic naturalism leads us to consider the ontological status of religious "reality" (religious values, ideals, and other "entities," whatever they are). Hence, the issue of *realism* regarding religious experience and its objects (as well as scientific and/or philosophical studies of such experience and its objects) can be taken up as an analogy to Dewey's conceptions of science and inquiry. This issue has potential applications not only for religious life but for theology and religious studies as well: that is, for any academic study of religion. From a Deweyan perspective, we may ask whether religious "reality" is "really there" independently of us

or constructed by us (our active pursuit of ideals). Finally, some comparisons to Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion and related currents will be made in order to situate the Deweyan approach in the field of recent philosophy of religion.

I will not study the evolution of Dewey's views on religion. For example, his early involvement with the absolute theistic idealism represented by thinkers such as Edward Caird cannot be discussed.[5] Roughly, Dewey's work on religion can be divided into (i) his early writings in the 1880–90s, (ii) the period from the mid-1890s to the late 1920s, during which his naturalism evolved and "religious issues tended to recede into the background,"[6] and (iii) his late views in the 1930s (and later). According to Steven Rockefeller, by 1894 Dewey had rejected most religious teachings unique to Christianity, while maintaining much of Christianity's ethical concerns[7] – and he never entirely gave up the idea of God, though he abandoned it in its traditional theological shape.[8] I will mainly focus on Dewey's mature position, especially *A Common Faith*, though I will refer to his writings prior to that book.

DEWEYAN PRAGMATIC NATURALISM

Dewey was a naturalist, maintaining that the natural world – with its immense riches and varieties – is all there is.[9] There is nothing outside this all-encompassing nature. Human beings are natural creatures along with everything else. But nature may be much more than is dreamt of by scientific materialists and reductionists. Dewey's naturalism was never a crude form of materialism; he understood "human nature" in an inherently teleological manner.[10] Even so, his pragmatic naturalism has usually been taken to diminish rather than highlight the importance of religion.[11]

Dewey urges that classical philosophical dualisms, such as mind and body, experience and nature, knowledge and action, science and technology, facts and values, or theory and practice, should be abandoned. Our human world is a mixture of these. In particular, the "experimentalist" attitude in inquiry rejects the traditional assumption, prevalent since Plato, that theoretical knowledge and practical action are fundamentally distinct. As soon as we abandon the "quest for certainty" characterizing this tradition, we realize that knowledge *is* action and theory *is* practice.

While nature, for Dewey, is everything, there is no privileged standpoint from which the fundamental metaphysical structure of nature "in itself" could be determined. Deweyan naturalism is thoroughly non-reductive. No scientific (or any other) discipline stands in an "absolute" position in describing and explaining reality. The Deweyan pragmatist, appealing to what is natural to human life, insists that such scientifically problematic things as values, freedom, purposiveness, and other culturally emergent features distinguishing us from mere animals belong to our "human nature." They do not lie beyond the natural world. On the contrary, our concept of nature must be modified in order to accommodate the undeniable fact that we naturally engage in normative evaluation of our actions.[12] It is through our participation in cultural practice, in value-laden forms of life, that we become fully human. This enculturation is a completely natural development. Hence, Deweyan naturalism is compatible with a "culturalist" conception of humanity,[13] maintaining that human life as we know it takes place in a "normative order" constructed and reconstructed within cultural practices.

From Dewey's perspective, the reductive (or eliminative) naturalists who seek to reduce, say, values to mere facts or to something non-normative and allegedly more fundamental (or, more radically, seek to eliminate them from the scientific worldview), are not good naturalists. Naturalism ought to take seriously what belongs to the natural world. It is a central element of human nature that we are normatively concerned creatures – beings engaged in evaluation. Our actions are guided by values, goals, and ideals. Thus, a full-blown naturalism is a pragmatic naturalism. It does not deny values or normativity, because they are crucial to our self-understanding as agents. While naturalism, as a general philosophical orientation, has often been criticized because of its tendency to lose normativity, this criticism does not apply to the non-reductive naturalism of the Deweyan stripe, which is, in a way, more thoroughly naturalistic than its reductive rivals. By embedding his non-reductive naturalism in pragmatism (or experimentalism), Dewey was able to accommodate values, for pragmatism starts from an action-centered picture of humanity, refusing to call such a picture into question on the grounds of an allegedly more fundamental scientific image of reality. Even natural science, the chief inspiration of reductive naturalism, is possible only within valuationally structured human life, as a

goal-directed practice. As soon as we realize that the pragmatic, experimental way of thinking typical of science is by no means restricted to scientific inquiry, we may extend it to non-scientific inquiries, including ethical, social, and even religious "inquiry." These, too, may reveal natural features of human practices.

Although Dewey argues against Cartesian epistemology (and, generally, against the Western tradition beginning with Plato's theory of eternal, immutable Forms as the objects of knowledge), it is not implausible to suggest that his naturalistic pragmatism is (quasi-) *Kantian*: he inquires, from within our natural practices, into what constitutes those practices, regarding normative evaluation as a (naturalized) condition for the possibility of certain humanly important phenomena, including science. In this sense, most contemporary naturalists have moved far away from Deweyan pragmatic naturalism. It is against the background of non-reductive pragmatic naturalism that Dewey's remarks on religious qualities in experience must be understood. Dewey's naturalism is broad, inclusive, and tolerant enough to accommodate humanly natural experiences of and valuational perspectives on reality that can be, and perhaps ought to be, characterized as religious.

PRAGMATIC RELIGIOUS NATURALISM: THE MESSAGE OF *A COMMON FAITH*

In interpreting Dewey's religious views, it is important to apply his pragmatic naturalism to religious values, ideals, and qualities of experience. The background here is the apparent clash between science and religion. This tension was a formative factor for Dewey's philosophy as a whole, a crisis to which he promised a pragmatist remedy.[14] In his (few) writings on religion he tried to resolve it by navigating between the perils of supernatural religions and religiously inspired moral conservatism,[15] on the one side, and militant atheism, on the other, arguing that both lose religious qualities of human experience, reducing experience to something poorer and narrower than what it may become.

For Dewey, religious values can be "inherent in natural experience."[16] "Any activity pursued in behalf of an ideal end against obstacles and in spite of threats of personal loss because of conviction of its general and enduring value is religious in quality."[17] "The

religious" must be liberated from the supernatural commitments of actual historical religions, from dogmas and doctrines that are, pragmatically, unnecessary. The values and ideals belonging to the religious attitude are not imaginary but real; they are "made out of the hard stuff of the world of physical and social experience."[18] The religious is, through this rearticulation, rendered part of nature – which, for Dewey, is all-encompassing.[19]

The basic contrast thus lies between religions and "the religious" (that is, religious experience, or religious qualities or aspects in experience). The *proton pseudos* of both traditional religions and militant atheism is the identification of the religious with the supernatural, which disentangles religiosity from life. Religion must be brought down to earth, to what is "common" between us. Supernaturalism – especially the claim that religions have a monopoly of supernatural means to further human ideals – is an obstacle in pursuing the natural changes that are in our power to bring about; hence, religious values need emancipation.[20] This is how Dewey contrasts his proposal to the quarrels between religious and scientific ideas:

> I shall develop another conception of the nature of the religious phase of experience, one that separates it from the supernatural and the things that have grown up about it. I shall try to show that these derivations are encumbrances and that what is genuinely religious will undergo an emancipation when it is relieved from them; that then, for the first time, the religious aspect of experience will be free to develop freely on its own account.[21]

Thus, Dewey is about to tell us what is "genuinely religious" – apparently in contrast to what is pseudo-religious or superstitious. The key to this normative distinction lies in the difference between (a) religion and the religious. A religion is "a special body of beliefs and practices having some kind of institutional organization," whereas "religious," as an adjective, does not denote any specific entity but "attitudes that may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal."[22] Many elements of actual religions survive from "outgrown cultures";[23] we should leave such baggage behind. Religions largely "prevent ... the religious quality of experience from coming to consciousness and finding the expression that is appropriate to present conditions, intellectual and moral"[24] – particularly to modern scientific thinking. Dewey, then, is not proposing *a* religion but "the emancipation of elements and outlooks that may be called religious."[25]

Dewey is above all speaking about religious experience, which is well in line with his more general project of raising experience to the status of a fundamental philosophical category.[26] However, Deweyan religious experience is social – his conception of the religious articulates a "common faith" rather than individual, as in the equally experience-centered philosophy of religion of his fellow pragmatist, James.[27] More importantly, religious experience, for Dewey, is not a special type of experience. It is not *sui generis*.[28] As a quality of experience, "religious" can be connected with aesthetic, scientific, moral, or political experience, as well as with experiences of companionship and friendship.[29] Whenever there is "a change *of* will conceived as the organic plenitude of our being," there is a religious attitude, outlook, or function.[30] Thus, "whatever introduces genuine perspective is religious."[31] Since, for Dewey, religious experience cannot be self-sustaining, but requires other experiences (scientific, moral, social, political, aesthetic),[32] one might, in contemporary philosophical jargon, read him as saying that religious qualities of experience *supervene* on those other, more fundamental, qualities, or that they *emerge* from the latter.

As Deweyan religious experience is in and of nature, the attitude which "attributes human achievement and purpose to man in isolation from the world of physical nature and his fellows" is "essentially unreligious."[33] Thus, a paradigmatic case of a non- or even pseudo-religious way of thinking, for Dewey, is an individualist, supernaturalist account of spirituality isolated from other individuals. Conversely, the paradigmatic case of a social enterprise carrying religious qualities is science, whose methods Dewey sought to incorporate into moral and political "inquiries." "Faith in the continued disclosing of truth through directed cooperative human endeavor is more religious in quality than is any faith in a completed revelation," Dewey argues.[34] Our "faith in intelligence" may, then, become religious in quality.[35] Here Dewey arrives at his famous definition, concluding the first chapter of *A Common Faith*: "Any activity pursued in behalf of an ideal end against obstacles and in spite of threats of personal loss because of conviction of its general and enduring value is religious in quality."[36]

In the second chapter, Dewey repeats his trust in the "new methods of inquiry and reflection" as having become "the final arbiter of

all questions of fact, existence, and intellectual assent."[37] The scientific method can accept nothing as sacrosanct, beyond critical testing.[38] There is no return to any prescientific revealed religion. Dewey characterizes "faith" as "the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive ideal ends, which imagination presents to us and to which the human will responds as worthy of controlling our desires and choices."[39] In moral faith, we are "possessed" by our imaginative vision of ideals; when this moral faith has a "unifying function," it may be called religious.[40] Again, there is no need to view the ideal ends "possessing" us as supernatural: "The assumption that these objects of religion exist already in some realm of Being seems to add nothing to their force, while it weakens their claim over us as ideals, in so far as it bases that claim upon matters that are intellectually dubious."[41] Yet, the "reality" of ideal ends and values is unquestionable. Dewey offers a pragmatic argument: it is "unnecessary" for the religious attitude to rely on supernatural dogma. Values arise from nature, having their roots in "natural conditions," emerging through imagination's "idealizing" existence.[42] Dewey is a pragmatic realist about values and ideals when he notes: "The aims and ideals that move us are generated through imagination. But they are not made out of imaginary stuff. They are made out of the hard stuff of the world of physical and social experience."[43]

One of the imaginatively projected ideals dear to many is the idea(l) of God, reinterpreted by Dewey as the "*active* relation between ideal and actual."[44] Dewey adds, however, that he would not insist that the name "God" must be given to this (or anything).[45] He seems to suggest that *if* we speak about God, this is how we should do it: scientifically, naturalistically, immanently, not dogmatically or supernaturalistically. Dewey's position is compatible with our not using the concept "God." Yet, Dewey wanted to make room for our use of that concept, to understand people who cannot help using it.[46] The concept of God as a relation between the ideal and the actual also helps us to overcome the "lack of natural piety" that "militant atheism" suffers from:

> A religious attitude ... needs the sense of a connection of man, in the way of both dependence and support, with the enveloping world that the imagination feels is a universe. Use of the words "God" or "divine" to convey the union of actual with ideal may protect man from a sense of isolation and from consequent despair or defiance.[47]

This way of conceptualizing divinity enables Dewey to connect his reflections with his view of continuous *growth* as our highest goal. The growth of knowledge in scientific inquiry, or "growth in understanding of nature," may also be religious in its aims and aspirations.[48] After all, the study of the mysteries of creation has often been viewed as a fundamentally religious activity.

In the third and final chapter, Dewey considers at more length the social relevance of his conception of faith. He argues that there is no need to "shut religious values up within a particular compartment" – to draw a sharp division between the religious, on the one side, and the secular or profane, on the other.[49] The liberation of the religious from narrow supernaturalism is ethically and socially, even politically, relevant:

> I cannot understand how any realization of the democratic ideal as a vital moral and spiritual ideal in human affairs is possible without surrender of the conception of the basic division to which supernatural Christianity is committed. Whether or no we are, save in some metaphorical sense, all brothers, we are at least all in the same boat traversing the same turbulent ocean. The potential religious significance of this fact is infinite.[50]

We have the potential to grow, struggling together toward the actualization of ideals, instead of assuming that our ideals are "already embodied in some supernatural or metaphysical sense in the very framework of existence."[51] Dewey's philosophy of religion is anti-metaphysical (in a sense to be explored below): there is no such thing as "the very framework of existence," because existence itself emerges in and through human ideal-driven inquiries. Yet there is a tension here. Dewey, as a good naturalist, does seem to subscribe to something he describes as "the mysterious totality of being the imagination calls the universe."[52] There is, after all, the natural universe, giving rise to any human values and ideals there may be. Religious qualities of experience are inherently related to this mysterious nature, or the awe we feel when realizing that we are parts of it, and its growth.

I have quoted at length from *A Common Faith* in order to emphasize the naturalist aspects of Dewey's philosophy of religion. This book, though Dewey's most sustained articulation of a philosophy of religion, is not the only work in which he discusses religion. Some of his writings prior to *A Common Faith* – which was published when

he was already seventy-five years old – contain excursions into religious topics.[53] In *Human Nature and Conduct*, Dewey says that the function of religion is "caricatured rather than realized" if religious consciousness is separated from morality and science.[54] He continues: "The religious experience is a reality in so far as in the midst of effort to foresee and regulate future objects we are sustained and expanded in feebleness and failure by the sense of an enveloping whole."[55] In the concluding pages, he returns to the issue:

> Religion has lost itself in cults, dogmas and myths. Consequently the office of religion as sense of community and one's place in it has been lost. In effect religion has been distorted into a possession – or burden – of a limited part of human nature, of a limited portion of humanity ... of a limited class within a partial group; priests, saints, a church. Thus other gods have been set up before the one God. Religion ... has been perverted into something uniform and immutable ... Instead of marking the freedom and peace of the individual as a member of an infinite whole, it has been petrified into a slavery of thought and sentiment, an intolerant superiority on the part of the few and an intolerable burden on the part of the many.[56]

Views familiar from *A Common Faith* were, thus, already present in Dewey's earlier works.[57] The crucial point is that religion should return to an intimate connection with our other social pursuits: the "religious spirit" will, Dewey tells us in *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, be "revivified" when it is brought into "harmony with men's unquestioned scientific beliefs and their ordinary day-by-day social activities."[58] Then, poetry and religious feeling "will be the unforced flowers of life."[59] In *The Quest for Certainty*, furthermore, Dewey characterizes the "religious attitude" as "a sense of the possibilities of existence and as devotion to the cause of these possibilities, as distinct from acceptance of what is given at the time," and urges the liberation of this attitude from "unnecessary intellectual commitments."[60] The potential energy of this attitude ought to be "released for positive activity in behalf of the security of the underlying possibilities of actual life."[61] The "unnecessary intellectual commitments" Dewey refers to are, again, the other-worldly ideas inherent in religious traditions. Such a postulation of an "other-world" is "a refuge, not a resource."[62]

After the publication of *A Common Faith* in 1934, a controversy over Dewey's religious views followed. Some traditional religious

thinkers welcomed Dewey's "new" religiously inclined ideas, whereas others saw them as falling short of the real thing. For example, Reinhold Niebuhr claimed, in his review of Dewey's book, that Dewey was closer to traditional religion than he supposed.[63] In particular, Henry Nelson Wieman's comments in *Christian Century* caused some debate.[64] From Dewey's perspective, Wieman illegitimately hypostatized the *functional* unity of forces contributing to the good (forces he was prepared to call "God") into a "prior organic unity," reading his own views into Dewey.[65] Secular readers of Dewey insisted that he should not be interpreted as a theist in any traditional sense. Dewey himself reviewed in the mid-1930s, before and after the appearance of *A Common Faith*, several books on religious and theological topics.[66] The discussion, succeeded by more general debates over the meaning of "naturalism,"[67] continued well into the 1950s and 1960s, and novel contributions are continuously published.

In the criticisms and interpretations following the publication of *A Common Faith*, a number of religious thinkers attacked Dewey's naturalization of religion. To one commentator, Dewey replied that "*A Common Faith* was not addressed to those who are content with traditions in which 'metaphysical' is substantially identical with 'supernatural.' It was addressed to those who have abandoned supernaturalism."[68] Naturalists wondered, on the contrary, why Dewey had to use the term "God" at all, and whether it would not after all be more natural to see him as an atheist. Arguably, Dewey's "God" is something like the combination of social intelligence, democracy,[69] and science, and the central issue of *A Common Faith* is social and political rather than religious.[70] Thus, as Rockefeller points out, Dewey was not a theist, because he rejected any transcendent God, treating "God" as "a preferential term that could be employed as a poetic symbol to identify those forces and values in experience that are of ultimate concern to a people in their quest for well-being."[71]

A crucial issue to be examined is the metaphysical status of the Deweyan divinity. I cannot deal with the commentators' – either Dewey's contemporaries' or more recent ones' – views in detail, but it is important to note that, from a traditional religious (Christian) perspective, Dewey's "God" lacks the attributes of a genuine theistic divinity, whereas from a naturalist perspective, it is hardly necessary to invoke such a pseudo-divinity at all, because nature and its own

entirely worldly forces and dynamics are sufficient to account for human ideas and ideals as well. So *why* do we need, *if* we do, a Deweyan God? In what sense is the Deweyan God *real*?

RELIGIOUS "REALITY" – READY-MADE OR CONSTRUCTED?

The pragmatically naturalist picture of religious values and qualities developed in *A Common Faith* seems to make the religious aspects of experience dependent on our ways of experiencing. This is a good reason to take a brief look at Dewey's perspective on the issue of realism and apply it to the religious case. The apparently sharp contrast between secular and theistic readings of Dewey may be based on ignorance, on both sides, of the depth of the realism vs. constructivism (idealism) tension in Deweyan pragmatism (and pragmatism generally).[72] The problem posed by *A Common Faith* is not just the contrast of *naturalism* vs. *supernaturalism* but, implicitly, *within* his general naturalist approach, the *realism* vs. *constructivism* contrast: is religiously relevant "reality," even God (as an ideal), humanly "constructed" through intelligent thought, activity, imagination, and inquiry, or is such a divine reality "ready-made" out there in the (transcendent) world itself? The fact that this problem lies at the core of Deweyan philosophy of religion helps us to appreciate the fundamentally Kantian nature of his philosophical problems, although he departed from Kant in obvious ways.

Hence, we should connect Dewey's concern with "the religious" with broader issues of inquiry, particularly the problem of the reality of the objects of inquiry. Here Dewey's philosophy of religion touches his more general pragmatist thought.[73] Dewey's pragmatic "instrumentalism" (also called "experimentalism," sometimes "operational thinking") accommodates an intriguing tension between standard realisms and antirealisms about the objects of inquiry. Dewey cannot be classified in the traditional terminology of the realism debate; yet, noticing a connection to this debate places his philosophy of religion in a proper perspective, often overlooked by his critics and sympathizers alike.[74]

Dewey's position in the philosophy of science is instrumentalist and more generally empiricist, although his talk about instrumentalism should *not* be equated with the narrower treatment by later

philosophers of science of the doctrine carrying the same title. He celebrates the operations and interaction needed for scientific knowledge, thereby rejecting the gap traditionally thought to lie between knowledge and action. This seems to lead to a form of antirealism:

> [The] scientific conceptions, like other instruments, are hand-made by man in pursuit of realization of a certain interest ... when the physical sciences describe objects and the world as being such and such, it is thought that the description is of reality as it exists in itself. ... [However, the] business of thought is not to conform to or reproduce the characters already possessed by objects but to judge them as potentialities of what they become through an indicated operation ... to think of the world in terms of mathematical formulae of space, time and motion is not to have a picture of the independent and fixed essence of the universe. It is to describe experienceable objects as material upon which certain operations are performed.[75]

Science has no more privileged relation to "the real" than (some) other human practices – including, perhaps, religious experience. "Scientific conceptions" are not "revelations of antecedent properties of real Being and existence" but "instrumentalities which direct operations of experimental observations."[76] Natural laws, similarly, are "intellectual instrumentalities," "*formulae for the prediction of the probability of an observable occurrence*," not statements about "ultimate and rigid uniformities of being."[77] A law that was supposed to "govern phenomena" ought to be understood as "a way of transacting business effectively with concrete existences."[78] Dewey equates the objects of science with "nature in its instrumental characters."[79] The pragmatic naturalist stops treating the objects of science as complete, absolute, or self-sufficient, as such metaphysical realism only results in the insoluble problem concerning the relation between perceptions and the "real objects" they are supposed to be about, with two incompatible kinds of knowledge and of the objects of knowledge.

Dewey's "instrumentalism," then, is not a theory about personal utility or satisfaction in knowing, but about the proper objects of science. His commitment to instrumentalism is relatively obvious when he argues that the problem of the "two tables" (the "Eddington tables") is illusory, because the table we perceive and use is "the only table," "for it alone has both individuality of form ... and also includes within itself a continuum of relations or interactions brought to a focus."[80] Maintaining that reality is what is given – or

actively "taken" – in experience, Dewey disagreed with the "new realists" of his time.[81] He writes:

> The world as we experience it is a real world. But it is not in its primary phases a world that is known, a world that is understood, and is intellectually coherent and secure. Knowing consists of operations that give experienced objects a form in which the relations, upon which the onward course of events depends, are securely experienced. It marks a transitional redirection and rearrangement of the real. It is intermediate and instrumental.[82]

If Dewey holds that the scientific table, or the "scientific image" in which the table is not a concrete, perceived, practically manipulated object, but a collection of microphysical particles, is unreal or illusory, he is subscribing to an instrumentalist antirealism, which several philosophers of science, especially scientific realists, have powerfully called into question. If this instrumentalist reading of Dewey is correct, it may be extended to the religious "objects" of experience, yielding a *theological instrumentalism*. Then, God and other religious "entities" would, qua ideals, be some kind of instruments of thought. Alternatively, if Dewey, rather, subscribes to *idealism*, or to what is today called *constructivism*, when maintaining that objects are not independent of inquiry but pragmatic constructions arising out of an intelligent use of the methods of inquiry, his view may again be applied to our "construction" of God. In religious experience, too, the ultimate reason for postulating a divine reality is the *functional* role played by such an ideal in human life.

Despite the instrumentalist and constructivist elements of Dewey's views, it would be overhasty to read him simply as an antirealist in either his philosophy of science or his philosophy of religion. He uses the terminology of "objects," "concepts," "conceptions," "theories," "hypotheses," etc. more loosely than is customary in recent analytic philosophy of science and religion, which makes confusions easy. Moreover, we should remember that Dewey was, primarily, a naturalist, arguing that experience and knowledge, including the production of scientific knowledge (and its objects), are natural phenomena in a natural world in which we try to settle our problematic situations. As noted, this naturalism goes well with humanism and culturalism. Whatever is natural to *our* practices of inquiry – our culturally developed habits of settling indeterminate situations by critically using the intelligence that itself naturally

arises as a human capacity of reacting to such situations – is to be accepted and understood in empirical detail, rather than treated with philosophical suspicion. Philosophical skepticism about, say, the existence of unobservable theoretical entities postulated in our most advanced and successful scientific theories (and/or practices) would be an utterly *unpragmatist* and *unnatural* attitude from Dewey's perspective. Rather, we should take seriously the natural practices of inquiry we engage in. It was the actual practice of inquiry itself that Dewey appealed to when, for instance, attacking the ancient ideal of certainty and the "spectator theory of knowledge."[83] Now, could the Deweyan naturalist say that there are equally natural practices of religious experiencing, yielding their own ontological postulations, such as God, and that there is no prior philosophical reason for being skeptical about such postulations? At least such an analogy of naturalism could be further examined in the philosophy of religion.

The Deweyan pragmatist is definitely *not* a scientific realist, *if* scientific realism is defined as the thesis that scientific theories provide us with the only true picture of reality, or that the "scientific image" is ontologically prior to the "manifest image" we are more directly acquainted with in ordinary experience.[84] Nor is the Deweyan pragmatist a *theological realist* if this means an analogous postulation of an ultimate religious reality knowable only through mysterious experience or revelation. But a Deweyan may be, and arguably Dewey himself was, a scientific realist in the sense of rejecting unnatural doubts about the reality of theoretical entities postulated in the actual course of scientific theorization, as long as such theorization is rooted in its humanly natural practical contexts: that is, the transactional processes of settling problematic situations arising in the course of experience. He *might* also have been, or the contemporary Deweyan might be, a pragmatic theological realist in the sense of accepting whatever the naturally religiously inclined "inquirer" finds necessary to postulate within her/his genuinely religious experience.

Of course, pragmatists should admit that any specific postulations of theoretical entities in science may prove ill-founded, and this applies to the postulation of "religious entities," too. But, as fallibilists, we should adopt such a critical, open attitude to *any* human claims and ideas whatsoever. The key pragmatist move in the

philosophy of science is to liberate not only science but also scientific realism – and any other philosophical interpretations of science we might practically *need* – from essentialist, foundationalist, and non-contextualist pursuit of certainty, and other remnants of "first philosophy." Similarly, the pragmatist move in the philosophy of religion is to liberate both theism and theological realism – and other philosophical interpretations of religious experience – from foundationalist dreams of an ultimate, absolute theological perspective on religious reality. Pragmatism offers a middle path (or several paths) between (i) realism and instrumentalist antirealism, and (ii) realism and constructivism – both in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of religion – demonstrating that the Deweyan approach to such controversies need not be hostile to realism in either field. The contextualization of the reality of both scientific and theological postulations to specific aims and purposes of inquiry and to the ongoing dynamics of experience has the advantage of keeping realism thoroughly pragmatic.

What I am suggesting is that this Deweyan pragmatic contextualization of the realism issue to practices of inquiry applies with full force to religious and/or theological inquiries. There is no need to suppose that there is (or is not) a ready-made divine reality out there, in a transcendent world order, waiting for us to penetrate it through either religious experience, dogmatic revelation, or theological sophistry. There is, rather, a human value-laden pursuit of religiously conceptualizable ideals, an ongoing struggle for the good in the natural world of material and social existence, and the "objects" of this struggle may be pragmatically regarded as "religiously real." *This* is the (or at least *a*) message of *A Common Faith*, connected with an understanding of naturalized pragmatic realism emerging from Dewey's major works.[85]

A basic tension in Dewey, then, is this: is God (or divine activity) dependent on us, our "construction," or is there something external to us, upon which *we* are fundamentally dependent? Dewey seems to hold that, through religious experiences, a process and force of creativity superior to our own emerges; nevertheless, this remains *our* postulation in and through our experience and practices. Interpreters have trouble finding a way out of this tension, worrying whether Dewey is led to a merely epiphenomenal picture of God. For example, Douglas Anderson labels Dewey's postulation a "half-God,"[86] while

William Rowe sees Dewey as a humanist whose "God" is a human achievement, produced by our intelligence and imagination.[87] Here, a (quasi-)Kantian reading *can* find a way out by construing the "dependence" of God, or divine creativity, on us (our postulations, experiences, practices, etc.) "transcendentally."[88] We do not causally or factually produce God (or scientific objects); what we do produce is the experiential practice or framework within which religiously meaningful ideals and the possibility of an "active union" of the ideal and the actual arise. *From within* such religious practices, God may be real enough. Our ideals are not illusory but among the truly real elements of the world we live in, producing real effects in our actions. If divinity arises in the functionally established harmony of the ideal and the actual, it need not be epiphenomenal or illusory; it may be an emergent, *pragmatically real* structure within a (quasi-) transcendentally constituted practice-laden framework.

DEWEY AND AMERICAN RELIGIOUS NATURALISM

We will come back to the issue of how metaphysical or antimetaphysical Dewey's philosophy of religion is. Meanwhile, however, we should take a brief look at how, following Dewey – and, in more theological circles, the Chicago School of liberal theology, especially its leading figure, Wieman – "religious naturalists" have defended thoroughly non- or antimetaphysical theories of religious experience and language.[89] Religious statements do *not*, they claim, refer to any metaphysical fundamental reality, especially not to any supernaturally structured reality; rather, they express our emotions or attitudes. Nature is the only ultimate, self-sufficient reality to be understood scientifically without appeals to any supernatural intelligent design.[90] Thus, we find recent religious naturalists speaking about, say, "grace" or "the sacred" as human modes of existing in *this* world, instead of referring to anything transcendent. Everything that can be explained can be scientifically explained; nevertheless, science will never tell us anything *deep* about the meaning or significance of the world or human life – about grace or "the sacred." Religious language may be needed to articulate our sense of meaning (or meaninglessness), one of our modes of existing. There are "religious aspects of this world that can be appreciated within a naturalistic framework."[91]

In a Deweyan manner, Charley Hardwick argues that the sacred, or God, cannot be found "in the ontological inventory of what exists," because religion must not be construed referentially. Faith should be understood "*exhaustively* as an existential self-understanding."[92] God is real for us "only in moments of transformation," in a faith "enacted ever anew" – not "objectively real."[93] Thus, one is "free to locate religious content in value, not ontology," yielding a *valuational theism*, in which "*God* or *God exists* can serve as a complex meta-expression for a form of life that is expressed as a theistic seeing-as ... Though *God* is not in the inventory of what exists [because that inventory is purely physicalist], *God exists* can be conceived valuationally in terms of the source of good."[94]

There could hardly be a clearer statement of an antimetaphysical religious naturalism.[95] Hardwick may even be taken to offer a reconstruction of Dewey's account of God as the active union of the actual and the ideal, though Dewey might have resisted the idea that God's existence is a "source" of good. The traditional theist will, unsurprisingly, remain unconvinced by this naturalist harmonization of religious discourse with a scientific worldview. Something is lost, such a theist will argue, if the supernatural element of religion – referring to something *beyond* human life and ideals – is abandoned. In particular, no doctrine of a *personal* God can be maintained in this kind of naturalism – either Hardwick's[96] or Dewey's. Even the treatment of the sacred and grace seem to be watered-down versions of their truly religious alternatives. Hardwick admits that the interesting challenges to religious naturalism are theological: how to develop a "full-blown religious perspective on naturalist terms," "how to relate to a specific religious tradition," and so on.[97] These are also challenges for the Deweyan theologian or philosopher of religion.

The overall concern of these thinkers – both Dewey and his naturalist followers, whether or not they see themselves as "Deweyans" – is to render religious faith and discourse acceptable, not by legitimating it metaphysically but by reinterpreting it as being essentially about values, about what is good or "ideal" in life, about ideal aims and goals, etc. The obvious response – today as much as in the 1930s when the controversy surrounding *A Common Faith* was intense – is that something important which has traditionally been a defining mark of the religious has been left out. A critic may argue that both religion and science will be turned into superficial pseudo-inquiries if

religion is rendered "scientifically acceptable" or intellectually warranted. This is too easy a harmony. We cannot turn religion into a scientifically acceptable discourse simply by saying that we are physicalists or naturalists when getting to the ontological business. If we seriously hold that the physical world is all there is, it is difficult to defend any religiously relevant "source" for the values invoked in religious discourse. Within such a naturalized religion, commitment to religious values is a kind of make-believe. As Rockefeller puts it: "If religious faith is basically moral faith, why use the word religious at all? What is distinctively religious about Dewey's concept of religious faith?"[98] Christian theologians such as Niebuhr felt that "something was missing" in Dewey's naturalized God.[99]

Given that Dewey's naturalism was non-reductive even in ontology, his position may be superior to that of the recent religious naturalists, however. Dewey needs no sharp separation between values and ontology, because there is no such thing as *the* ontology of the real world. Any ontology we may be justified in accepting is value-laden. If so, valuational religious perspectives on what there is may be as natural, and therefore as warranted, as non-religious ones. This "perspectival" justification of religion needs further scrutiny, but here I can only continue to examine its relation to metaphysics.

NATURALISM, RELIGION, AND (ANTI)METAPHYSICS: DEWEY AND WITTGENSTEIN

The "Wittgensteinian" philosopher of religion may, despite obvious differences, be vulnerable to the same kind of critique as the religious naturalist. Wittgenstein himself declared that the believer and the non-believer may share the same worldview, thus maintaining exactly the same factual beliefs. The value or meaning of the world is not to be found *in* the world, according to Wittgenstein. Therefore, the Wittgensteinian alternative in the philosophy of religion may come close to the antimetaphysical, naturalist line of thought just outlined, even though some of Wittgenstein's writings (particularly *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) may also be seen as belonging to the genre of mystical literature.[100] Wittgenstein would never have approved of Dewey's or other religious naturalists' way of rendering religious qualities of experience scientifically acceptable. Yet,

Wittgensteinian insights into religious language may enrich the Deweyan separation between religious experience and the dogma of traditional religions, if one fears that Dewey leaves religious experience without determinate content.[101]

The comparison between Deweyan and Wittgensteinian perspectives may be continued by invoking the notion of *genuine* religious experience, as contrasted to pseudo-religious or superstitious dogma. Indeed, Dewey's charge against traditional religions in *A Common Faith* might be understood as an argument against their pseudo-religious tendencies. Truly religious values and qualities must, he repeatedly argues, be emancipated from the domination of supernaturalist assumptions. Yet it is difficult to draw the line between the religious and the pseudo-religious.[102] Though Wittgenstein would have resisted any easy reconciliations of science and religion, he might have agreed that supernaturalist, dogmatic religions are pseudo-religious in treating valuational statements as metaphysical statements about the essence of reality. Such supernaturalism breaks the rules of truly religious language use.

Equipped with this insight, we may return to the issue of metaphysics vs. antimetaphysics in Deweyan philosophy of religion. At a general level – in relation to Dewey's conception of experience and nature – there has been considerable debate over whether Dewey engages in metaphysics at all, and if so, in what sense.[103] I will not continue this debate but only note, again, that it can be applied to religion. We may ask whether Dewey is really talking about religious qualities or religious reality, or *only* about human attitudes, practices, experiences, etc. Is there a possibility for a "religion after metaphysics,"[104] or will such a "religion" be merely a deflated pseudo-version of the real thing? Could a naturalized account of divinity suffice for a religiously adequate conception of "ultimate meaning"[105] – or is such a notion a remnant of foundationalist metaphysical theology? Obviously, these questions arise in the context of Wittgenstein's and his followers' philosophy of religion too (as well as in Rortyan neopragmatist reflections on religion).

These problems go back to Kant. Both Kant and Dewey rejected dogmatic, transcendent, theistic metaphysics; both approached religiosity from an ethical point of view, Kant in terms of practical reason and Dewey in terms of values and ideals. For Dewey, the pursuit of "ultimate meaning" and value in a supposed isolation from other human beings and nature is illusory.[106] However, Dewey's view on

religious qualities in experience may be too deflated for a Kantian taste. After all, Kant attempted to save elements of traditional Christian theism, even metaphysical theism, though in a form subordinated to ethics. As Shook observes, Dewey's God, even in the early idealist phase, was never fully theistic in the sense of being external to human nature; it was "immanent in human nature."[107] Perhaps, however, we may see Dewey's God as an *ethico-metaphysical* principle, if we understand metaphysics itself (religious metaphysics included) as subordinated to, or inextricably entangled with, ethics (moral values, ideals, and commitments).[108]

There is a form of metaphysics that might be maintained even in the Deweyan – and, *mutatis mutandis*, Wittgensteinian – framework, with no commitments to supernatural dogmas. This is a metaphysics emphasizing the *mystery* of the natural world, requiring a kind of humility and recognition of our indebtedness to nature for everything there is and for everything we are, or can ever hope to be. J. P. Soneson argues that such a "combined sense of mystery and indebtedness" characterizes the Deweyan "religious quality of experience,"[109] and that if this is appreciated, we may even view Dewey as "fundamentally a religious thinker."[110] The primary context for this understanding of Dewey is the "precariousness" or "instability" of existence – our insecurity and contingency – he emphasized not only in his writings on religion but especially in *Experience and Nature*.[111]

Life is potentially tragic, because we may always lose things we hold dear. Deweyan philosophy of religion by no means denies the reality – the full, painful reality – of evil and tragedy.[112] A recognition of their reality *is* a kind of metaphysics – a metaphysics of the fundamental (though historically changeable) traits of human existence in a precarious natural world full of contingency, a world that is a source of tragic collapses as well as of liberating, enabling, energizing hope. Soneson is, I believe, right to point out that Dewey *is* a metaphysician in a Kantian sense. For both, "the task of metaphysics is to state the conditions for the possibility of knowledge," though for Dewey, such conditions are not apodictic a priori ones.[113] Metaphysics "reflect[s] upon what our talk about things implies about the kind of world or context in which we live."[114] It is roughly in this sense that we may view Dewey's treatment of the religious aspects of experience as metaphysical in a quasi-Kantian manner. The dualism between metaphysics and the criticism of metaphysics,

just like the one between religious and secular views or experiences, collapses in Deweyan pragmatism – as it does in Wittgensteinian reflections on the ways in which "essence lies in grammar."[115] The true pragmatist has no practical use for such sharp dichotomies, not even in theology.

Yet, arguably, Dewey might have paid more attention to evil and suffering as both metaphysical and religious or theological problems. Despite the devastating loss of two sons, he maintained a generally optimistic (melioristic) attitude to life, while recognizing the reality of tragedy.[116] The question is whether his recognition of the tragic sense of life is deep enough in ethical and/or religious terms. For instance, James's depiction of a "sick soul" in the *Varieties* may, in the end, be religiously more adequate.

CONCLUSION

I have compared Dewey's project to the metaphysics vs. antimetaphysics contrast as it emerges in other twentieth-century currents in the philosophy of religion, especially the Wittgensteinian one. A number of other comparisons might have been offered; consider, for instance, the crucial influence on Dewey that Peirce's and James's pragmatisms had. In contrast to these pragmatists' more supernaturalist tendencies – even Peirce's, given his speculative evolutionary cosmology – Dewey is the sober naturalist. It is because of his resolutely antimetaphysical orientation that the comparison to the Wittgensteinian standpoint is motivated. On the other hand, it would be mistaken to view Dewey as simply subscribing to what has become known as Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion. The Wittgensteinians' virtually exclusive emphasis on religious language use is misleading from a Deweyan perspective. Nor can we accept the interpretation that Dewey is thoroughly antimetaphysical in his philosophy of religion – or in his philosophy generally – although there are strong antimetaphysical tendencies in his thought. He constructs a new, pragmatic metaphysics irreducible to old, nonpragmatic ones – just as he reconstructs our ways of thinking about the religious. Perhaps we should, then, see Dewey as a philosopher pragmatically destroying yet another traditional dichotomy – the one between metaphysics and the criticism of metaphysics. He is engaged in both, entangling the two. Similarly, his religious naturalism

obviously attacks the traditionally sharp dualism between the spiritual and the secular or profane. Deweyan religiosity embodies an attitude of "natural piety" toward the totality of nature: the universe that both overwhelms us and is a source of our values and ideals, connected with a unifying moral faith in those ideals.[117]

What we should find most valuable in Dewey's work on religion is his painstaking effort to harmonize scientific and religious thought. Consider, in conclusion, how he closes *A Common Faith*:

> Ours is the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying and expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive it more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it. Here are all the elements for a religious faith that shall not be confined to sect, class, or race. Such a faith has always been implicitly the common faith of mankind. It remains to make it explicit and militant.[118]

Whether or not Dewey is read as a secular or (with qualifications) religious thinker, his proposal to enhance humankind's growth through what he saw as the religious qualities and values in experience is to be applauded. The integration of science and religion he aims at is difficult, perhaps impossible, to achieve, but both scientific and religious thinkers may benefit from his reconciliatory efforts. No radical atheism in the style of Daniel Dennett or Richard Dawkins can ever promote the – even scientific – "common faith of mankind" Dewey propounded.[119] Nor can, of course, religious enthusiasts' potentially antiscientific ideas. The Deweyan middle ground – just like the pragmatist middle ground in many other philosophical problems – is hard to occupy, but it might itself be seen as an ideal we may indefinitely seek to actualize.

NOTES

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1. See W. J. Gavin, ed., *In Dewey's Wake? Unfinished Work in Pragmatic Reconstruction* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).
2. For a discussion of James's philosophy of religion, see S. Pihlström, *The Trail of the Human Serpent is over Everything: Jamesian Perspectives on Mind, World, and Religion* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008). For Dewey's own remarks on James's individualist approach to religion, which differed from his own, see J. Dewey, "The Philosophy of William James" (1937), *LW* 11:474–476. On the influence of James's functional psychology of religious experience on Dewey's views, see S. C. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 469–471.
3. J. Dewey, *A Common Faith* (1934), *LW* 9:1–58.
4. These include the "religious naturalists" in American theology, such as H. N. Wieman and the Chicago School of liberal theology, not to be considered here in detail, but see below.
5. J. R. Shook, *Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000), p. 68. According to Shook, Dewey's early idealistic philosophy may even be close to pan(en) theism; see p. 133. For more details on the early development of Dewey's religious ideas, see Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, part I.
6. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 21.
7. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 215.
8. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 231. For example, Rockefeller quotes a 1904 poem by Dewey to the memory of his dead sons, in which Dewey refers to them as "God's blessed loan," p. 231; see also Rockefeller, *John* Dewey, pp. 320–323, for later poems with symbolic references to God.
9. This chapter is not the proper place for a close reading of Dewey's major naturalist texts, such as *Experience and Nature* (1925), *LW* 1. See Gale, Chapter 3 in this volume, for a more comprehensive treatment of Deweyan naturalism. A brief contextualization for the application of that naturalism to religion must be offered though.
10. Shook, *Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality*, p. 203.
11. Such is, for instance, the impression one gets from L. Hickman, "John Dewey, 1859–1952," in *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy*,

ed. A. T. Marsoobian and J. Ryder (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 165.

12. I would suggest that the Deweyan naturalist, like John McDowell in *Mind and World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), engages in a "rethinking" of the concept of nature. In addition to McDowell's work, there are important collections of articles critical of reductive naturalism but exploring the possibilities of "softer" naturalisms, e.g. M. de Caro and D. Macarthur, eds., *Naturalism in Question* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
13. Cf. S. Pihlström, "On the Concept of Philosophical Anthropology," *Journal of Philosophical Research* 28 (2003), 259–285.
14. See e.g. J. P. Diggins, *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 212–217; and Rockefeller, *John Dewey*.
15. Reinhold Niebuhr's "theological neo-orthodoxy" was (at least implicitly) among the objects of Dewey's critique. On the religious situation in the early 1930s as a background for Dewey's project, see Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 452ff.
16. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 20.
17. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 19.
18. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 33.
19. See Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, chapters 10 and 11; M. Eldridge, *Transforming Experience: John Dewey's Cultural Instrumentalism* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1998), chapter 5; L. Hickman, "Cultivating a Common Faith: Dewey's Religion," in *Pragmatism as Post-postmodernism: Lessons from John Dewey* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007). Many interpreters have argued that Dewey's main interest in *A Common Faith* is not religion as such, but social progress, democracy, and other more worldly topics on which he wrote voluminously elsewhere. However, for a comprehensive treatment of Dewey's theological relevance – even for Deweyan pragmatism as a theological methodology – see J. P. Soneson, *Pragmatism and Pluralism: John Dewey's Significance for Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993).
20. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 19–24, 38–39, 45, 50–53. Cf. also J. Dewey, "One current religious problem" (1936), *LW* 11:115–117; J. Dewey, "Anti-naturalism in Extremis" (1943), *LW* 15:49–62, p. 56; and J. Dewey, "Contribution to 'Religion and the Intellectuals'" (1950), *LW* 16:390–394. The emancipatory project of these writings is analogous to the project of liberating aesthetic experience as a natural form of human experiencing in J. Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934), *LW* 10. See, again, Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, chapter 11, for remarks on *Art as*

Experience in relation to Dewey's views on "natural piety" and "mystical intuition."

21. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 4.
22. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 8.
23. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 6.
24. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 8.
25. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 8.
26. For the importance of the concept of (primary) experience in Dewey, see D. L. Hildebrand, *Beyond Realism and Antirealism: Dewey and the Neopragmatists* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2003).
27. See W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902), ed. F. H. Burkhardt, F. Bowers, and I. K. Skrupskelis (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985). Hickman, in "Cultivating a Common Faith," p. 197, notes that Dewey did not reject religious institutions but argued that they should be pragmatically assessed in terms of their functioning in the enhancement of experience.
28. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 472. One contrast perceived by Rockefeller is to Rudolf Otto's theory of "the holy."
29. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 9.
30. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 13.
31. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 17.
32. See also M. Konvitz's "Introduction," *LW* 9:xiv. Furthermore, Konvitz points out that, according to some religious traditions, the relation between religious and moral experience is opposite to the one described by Dewey: morality might be a derivative value of a more fundamental religious attitude to life, not vice versa (p. xxviii). Another question that arises here is why precisely these kinds of experience are fundamental to religious experience. Could there be other forms of experience, perhaps more banal and everyday ones (e.g. related to sports), in which religious elements could also be involved? Think about the "religious" enthusiasm of some ice hockey fans, for instance.
33. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 18.
34. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 18.
35. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 19. As Rockefeller notes in *John Dewey*, p. 104, all knowledge, scientific or philosophical, was religiously meaningful and valuable according to young Dewey in the 1880s. See Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 442–443, for Dewey's view on the religious value of faith in the experimental method of science.
36. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 19.
37. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 22–23.
38. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 27–28.
39. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 23.

40. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 478–479.
41. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 29; cf. pp. 32–33.
42. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 33.
43. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 33.
44. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 34; emphasis in the original.
45. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 34–35.
46. Dewey, in *A Common Faith*, p. 35 writes: "Whether one gives the name 'God' to this union, operative in thought and action, is a matter for individual decision. But the *function* of such a working union of the ideal and actual seems to me to be identical with the force that has in fact been attached to the conception of God in all the religions that have a spiritual content; and a clear idea of that function seems to me urgently needed at the present time."
47. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 36.
48. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 38.
49. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 44–45. This suggestion might be compared to analogous pragmatist accounts in moral philosophy: morality, or moral experience, is so ubiquitous in human practices that it should not be "compartmentalized" in its own special department. Moral values pervade our existence as a whole; experience comes to us "screaming with values," as Hilary Putnam often quotes Dewey as saying. See H. Putnam, *The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
50. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 55–56.
51. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 56.
52. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 56.
53. See also the following writings by Dewey: "Christianity and Democracy" (1893), *EW* 4:3–10; "Religious Education as Conditioned by Modern Psychology and Pedagogy" (1903), *MW* 3:210–215; "Religion and our Schools" (1908), *MW* 4:165–177; "Fundamentals" (1924), *MW* 15:3–7; and "Religion and Morality in a Free Society" (1949), *LW* 15:170–183.
54. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922), *MW* 14:181.
55. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 181.
56. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 226–227.
57. See also Dewey's critical remarks on the rise of "religious individualism" and its influences in J. Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *MW* 12:105–106; cf. J. Dewey, *Individualism, Old and New* (1930), *LW* 5:71–72.
58. Dewey, *Reconstruction*, p. 200.
59. Dewey, *Reconstruction*, p. 201.
60. J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *LW* 4:242–243; cf. pp. 242–247.
61. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 243.
62. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 244.

63. Niebuhr reviewed *A Common Faith* in *Nation* 139 (1934), 358–359. Other reviews appeared in 1934–35, in e.g. *Philosophical Review, Mind, Christian Register, Philosophy, Christian Century, Anglican Theological Review, New Republic, International Journal of Ethics, Yale Review, New Masses, School and Society, Common Sense, Social Frontier, The Monist, Journal of Philosophy, Thought*, and *Catholic World*. For these reviews, see J. R. Shook, *Pragmatism: An Annotated Bibliography 1898–1940* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998), pp. 461–464; and the editors' "Textual Commentary" to *LW* 9:452–453.
64. See the relevant material, by Wieman and others, included as appendices in *LW* 9, and see Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 512–527, for a detailed account of Dewey's exchange on God with his critics.
65. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 515. Cf. *LW* 9:219–221, 226–227.
66. J. Dewey, "A God or the God?" (1933), *LW* 9:213–222; J. Dewey, "Intimations of Mortality" (1935), *LW* 11:425–427; J. Dewey, "Bergson on Instinct" (1935), *LW* 11:428–431; J. Dewey, "Religion, Science, and Philosophy" (1936), *LW* 11:454–463; Dewey, "The Philosophy of William James," pp. 464–478.
67. The book, *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, ed. Y. H. Krikorian (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), raised some controversy; see also Dewey's joint paper with S. Hook and E. Nagel, "Are Naturalists Materialists?," in *Dewey and his Critics*, ed. S. Morgenbesser (New York: Journal of Philosophy, Inc., 1977), pp. 385–400.
68. J. Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge, and Value: A Rejoinder" (1939), *LW* 14:80. Thus, in Dewey's own words, *A Common Faith* is *not* intended as an argument for naturalism or against supernaturalism, but as a naturalist treatise for those who have already left supernaturalism behind.
69. Compare with J. Dewey, "The Relation of Philosophy to Theology" (1893), *EW* 4:367: "The next religious prophet who will have a permanent and real influence on men's lives will be the man who succeeds in pointing out the religious meaning of democracy, the ultimate religious value to be found in the normal flow of life itself." Rockefeller's *John Dewey* is, as a whole, a grand narrative on how Dewey sought to integrate democratic life with religious life.
70. E. Rosenow, "The Teacher as Prophet of the True God: Dewey's Religious Faith and its Problems," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 31 (1997), 427–437.
71. S. C. Rockefeller, "Pragmatism, Democracy, and God," *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy* 14 (1993), 263–278.
72. In his essay on American philosophy of religion, W. D. Dean does refer to the tension between constructivism and radical empiricism in both

Dewey and James, but he hardly views the realism issue in the transcendental light I will give to it below. See W. D. Dean, "Religion," in *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy*, pp. 334–335.

73. For details on Dewey's pragmatist theory of inquiry, see Levi, Chapter 4 in this volume.
74. In this section, I partly rely on the discussion of Dewey's pragmatic realism in S. Pihlström, "How (Not) to Write the History of Pragmatist Philosophy of Science?," *Perspectives on Science* 16 (2008), 26–69; and "The Realism Issue from the Perspective of Deweyan Pragmatism," *Americana* 3 (2008).
75. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 109–110.
76. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 153–154.
77. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 164–165; emphasis in the original.
78. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 165.
79. All of chapter 4, "Nature, Means and Knowledge," of *Experience and Nature* is essential to this account of the status of scientific objects.
80. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 191.
81. See the exchanges collected in Morgenbesser, *Dewey and his Critics*, part II.
82. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 235.
83. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 163–164, 195.
84. According to R. Rorty, "Pragmatism, Religious Faith, and Intellectual Romance," in *The Cambridge Companion to William James*, ed. R. A. Putnam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 92–93, scientific realism and religious fundamentalism are "products of the same urge," the pursuit of an absolute conception of reality. It is this pursuit that the pragmatist who follows Dewey should abandon. One need not be a Rortyan in order to appreciate these insights.
85. Only a few commentators, early or late, have emphasized this combination of pragmatic realism and constructivism in *A Common Faith*. Howard Parsons, "The Meaning and Significance of Dewey's Religious Thought," *Journal of Religion* 40 (1960), 183–184, is an exception: "The reality of God is not just the world, nor is it man; it is the dynamic, unifying, and creative conjunction of the two. It includes both man and nature as creative. God must be activity for Dewey, for activity is the universal category of nature; but in Dewey's thought God appears to be a unique kind of activity ... Yet, as such, the activity of God is not distinguished, in Dewey's thought, from that of man ... [Dewey sometimes] leaves the impression ... that the divine activity is nothing more than the work of man. Yet there are numerous indications in Dewey's writings that there is a creativity in human life other than man's own creativity."

86. D. R. Anderson, "Smith and Dewey on the Religious Dimension of Experience: Dealing with Dewey's Half-God," *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy* 14 (1993), 161–176. Elsewhere, Anderson observes that Dewey comes close to a "Peircean realism of ideals" and that his God may be "real" in this Peircean sense: "real in the power of ideals and their possibilities, but not *existent* as a being." D. R. Anderson, "Theology as Healing: A Meditation on *A Common Faith*," in *Dewey Reconfigured: Essays on Deweyan Pragmatism*, ed. C. Haskins and D. I. Seiple (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 89–90.
87. W. L. Rowe, "Religion within the Bounds of Naturalism: Dewey and Wieman," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 38 (1995), 23.
88. There is much confusion with the concept of the *transcendental*. Both Dewey himself and leading commentators such as Rockefeller (see *John Dewey*, pp. 371–372, 468) seem to confuse it with the *transcendent*. The fact that Dewey avoided committing himself to any transcendent realm of supernatural beings does not mean that his views cannot be reinterpreted in a transcendental (Kantian) manner (his opposition to orthodox Kantianism notwithstanding).
89. For a general discussion of this movement in American philosophy of religion, see J. E. Smith, *Themes in American Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 169–176. In this section, I partly rely on my earlier paper on religious naturalism: S. Pihlström, "Three Kinds of Religious Naturalism: A Pragmatic Critique," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 17 (2005), 177–218.
90. See e.g. J. A. Stone, "What Is Religious Naturalism?," *Journal of Liberal Religion: An Online Theological Journal* 2 (2000), available at: www.meadville.edu/stone_2_1.htm and "Varieties of Religious Naturalism," *Zygon* 38 (2003), 89–93; C. D. Hardwick, *Events of Grace: Naturalism, Existentialism, and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); "Religious Naturalism Today," *Zygon* 38 (2003), 111–116.
91. Stone, "Varieties," 89. Religious naturalism has affinities with the Wittgensteinian tradition in the philosophy of religion (see the next section), although both naturalists and Wittgensteinians tend to deny such affinities.
92. Hardwick, "Religious Naturalism Today," 113.
93. Hardwick, "Religious Naturalism Today," 115.
94. Hardwick, "Religious Naturalism Today," 114.
95. Another illuminating comparison might be made to the continentally oriented reinterpretations of religion in a "post-onto-theo-logical" framework, in which the idea of God as *a* being in the world is abandoned in order to achieve a more authentic relation to divinity.
96. Hardwick, "Religious Naturalism Today," 112.

97. Hardwick, "Religious Naturalism Today," 115–116.
98. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 468.
99. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 524.
100. It is beyond the scope of this paper to evaluate either Wittgenstein's or his commentators' views on religion. I will only briefly note some analogies and disanalogies with Deweyan views.
101. For such a Wittgensteinian approach to a Deweyan problem, see S. F. Aikin and M. P. Hodges, "Wittgenstein, Dewey, and the Possibility of Religion," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 20 (2006), 1–19.
102. Cf. S. Pihlström, "Religion and Pseudo-religion: An Elusive Boundary," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 62 (2007), 3–32.
103. These debates have often followed the interpretations given in R. W. Sleeper, *The Necessity of Pragmatism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986).
104. Cf. M. A. Wrathall, ed., *Religion after Metaphysics?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
105. See Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 527–539.
106. Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, p. 562.
107. Shook, *Dewey's Empirical Theory*, p. 143. On the Kantian background of Dewey's early idealism, see p. 140.
108. I find such an entanglement obvious in James; see S. Pihlström, *The Trail of the Human Serpent is over Everything*. However, arguing the point in the Deweyan case goes beyond the scope of this chapter.
109. Soneson, *Pragmatism and Pluralism*, p. 90.
110. Soneson, *Pragmatism and Pluralism*, pp. 126–127.
111. Soneson, *Pragmatism and Pluralism*, p. 129.
112. Soneson in *Pragmatism and Pluralism*, p. 131, reflects: "The tension between tragedy and hope, I want to argue, is the womb in which the religious function, as Dewey understands it, is nurtured and born. There is no need for the religious function apart from the tragedy of life. On the other hand, the religious function is not possible apart from the potential for growth that grounds the hope that circumstances can change for the better, that fulfillment or satisfaction – salvation, to use the more traditional term – is possible amid the tragedy of life." See also Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 484–490.
113. Soneson, *Pragmatism and Pluralism*, pp. 166–167.
114. Soneson, *Pragmatism and Pluralism*, p. 167. Anderson, "Smith and Dewey," 169, also admits that *A Common Faith* is "metaphysical in the sense [Dewey] allowed – he is attempting to mark the generic traits of the religious dimension."
115. See L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), I, § 371.

116. See Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, chapter 5.
117. On Dewey's notion of natural piety, see Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, chapter 11, especially pp. 495–501. Rockefeller, pp. 505–506 cites the closing of Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, pp. 313–314, as Dewey's key passage on natural piety. Cf. Hickman, "Cultivating a Common Faith," p. 204.
118. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, pp. 57–58.
119. Therefore, from a Deweyan perspective, popular criticisms of religion such as D. Dennett, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (New York: Viking, 2006), or R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Bantam Books, 2003), whatever their other merits, can hardly be taken seriously as *philosophical* efforts to understand religion. In particular, from a Deweyan perspective, the issue of reconciling Darwinian evolution with religion (a major issue for critics of religion such as Dennett and Dawkins, somewhat understandably in the contemporary American context) hardly arises at all; from early on, Dewey saw no problem in this reconciliation (see Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, pp. 138–140).

RICHARD ELDRIDGE

11 Dewey's aesthetics

PROBLEMS IN DEFINING ART

Defining "art" has been a central occupation of philosophers of art throughout the history of the subject. This is quite natural. The range of things that have been talked about and treated as art in one context or another at some time or other is bewilderingly vast, including such items as popular films, Greek urns, experimental poetry, cathedrals, novels high and low, gardens, works of fashion, jokes, string quartets, sonnets, shields, ballets, photographs, and on and on. Reputations, modes of appropriate attention and discourse, places in curricula, and prices in various ways turn on what is treated as art how and when. If it is not the business of philosophers of art to analyze the concept of art so as to sort things out a bit, it is hard to see what their business ought to be.

Taking up this business, philosophers have proposed definitions that variously treat (mimetic) representational content, (significantly absorbing) form, (well-wrought and shareable) expressiveness, or certification by accredited authorities as a necessary and sufficient condition for art. Nöel Carroll provides a useful survey of such efforts at definition in his recent *Philosophy of Art*, concluding, alas, that they one and all founder on counterexamples. Much purely instrumental music, Carroll argues, lacks mimetic representationality; conceptual art is neither particularly expressive nor formally significant; there are no authorities to accredit works of art in some early tribal contexts; and so on. Carroll then proposes that instead of defining art strictly in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, we might do well to identify works of art more loosely by "accurately narrating the descent of [a] new work from the tradition" via "an *historical*

narrative."[1] This suggestion is attractively flexible. Yet in the end it seems only to push the issue back one or two steps further. What counts as the tradition *of art* against the background of which we are to identify works now? And whose narrative, cast in what terms, will be a narrative of the tradition *of art* as opposed, say, to the traditions of religion, warfare, collecting the exotic, courtship, and so on? As Guy Sircello cogently argues, narratives of art are likely to show as much about the narrator and the narrator's values as about any "external" subject-matter: "any serious and reasoned determination of what is art and what is not [will] project some attitude or personal characteristic," so that we shall have sooner or later to face the question of "which attitude or character it is best to have."[2] Defining art will hence imply, inter alia, such things as articulating one's commitments, declaring an emotional and valuational stance, and seeking a future of increased coherence and fluency in living with others. One will have to address all at once the meanings of works of art (emotional and "iconic," beyond "ordinary" and measurement-driven representation), the devices of form through which such meanings are carried, and the significance of the cultural work that art may carry out.

DEWEY'S ENGAGED ATTENTION TO LIFE

John Dewey specifically embraced the declamatory, agreement-seeking, and value-suffused character of the enterprise of the philosophy of art. According to Dewey, philosophy is not the detached and neutral determination of the intension and extension of concept words; instead, all philosophizing – indeed, all cognitive activity – is value-laden. Working consistently against the grain of an "objectivizing" impulse in philosophy that would see the task of philosophy in any domain as the "correct representation," purged of all subjective elements, of an "external" subject matter, Dewey displayed what J. E. Tiles usefully describes as a persistent "drive to understand things in terms of organic relatedness throughout his career."[3] Dewey's way of doing the philosophy of art was specifically driven by his senses of the roles of both art and the philosophy of art in relation to wider problems of human life. "[The] task [of the philosophy of art] is to restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events,

doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience."[4] It is no accident that Chapter 1 of *Art as Experience* is entitled "The Live Creature." There is no way effectively to begin to think about the nature and functions of works of art without thinking about the nature, situation, and prospects of human beings.

Dewey's thinking about art begins from a sharp sense that there is something wrong with the ways of the world in modern industrial society. Both activity and receptivity are "separated from meaning," so that "work, productive activity, signifies action carried on for merely extraneous ends, ... [while] happiness signifies surrender of mind to the thrills and excitations of the body."[5]

> Surely there is no more significant question before the world than the question of the possibility and method of reconciliation of the attitudes of practical science and contemplative aesthetic appreciation. Without the former man will be the sport and victim of natural forces which he cannot use or control. Without the latter, mankind might become a race of economic monsters, restlessly driving hard bargains with nature and with one another, bored with leisure or capable of putting it to use only in ostentatious display and extravagant dissipation.[6]

Such separations of activity and receptivity from meaning are, however, neither necessary nor inevitable. According to a thought that Dewey shares with Aristotle, Schiller, and Collingwood, among others, there is an aim of human life that is at least prospectively more fully available to more people than now actually achieve it: "freedom *from* subjection to caprice and blind appetite, freedom *in* the full play of activity."[7] Successful works of art for Dewey are, as Tiles puts it, "more successful captivators of the conscious mind."[8] In both making and apprehending works of art, the separations of activity and receptivity from meaning are to some extent overcome, so that we are "carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves."[9] Works of art are not mere "external" objects that are defined for and to detached "observational" intelligence by spatio-temporal location or score or proof text. Rather, "the actual work of art is what the [art] product does with and in experience."[10] As Thomas Alexander aptly puts it, for Dewey "art and aesthetic experience mark the fulfillment of nature in experience and of experience in meaning. It is there that the capacities to achieve the interpenetration of sense and value in human life are realized."[11] "Mind," Dewey writes, "is primarily a

verb."[12] Minding is a matter of using form – linguistic, pictorial, sculptural, acoustic, kinetic, spatial, etc. as may be – to achieve emotionally and attitudinally significant presentation of and attention to phenomena of human life in nature, and minding is the task of both philosophy, in its scrutinizing of our conceptual commitments, and art, in its manipulations of materials in a medium. The task of minding, and so of achieving a sense of fuller significance in activity and receptivity, is carried out, Dewey would have it, by art, with its focus on singular, "iconic" presentation and thematization, more powerfully and effectively than it is in any other region of human practice.

ART AS EXPERIENCE: STRUCTURE, TOPICS, AND CENTRAL CLAIMS

Art as Experience is an elaborately rich but not so argumentatively consecutive book. Bearing in mind the traditional topics of the philosophy of art, one might set out its organization as follows.

Starting point: Human beings, their situation, problems, and possibilities (Chapters I, II)
Aesthetic Experience (III)
Expression (IV, V)
Form (VI, VII)
Agency (VIII)
Representation (IX, X)
Miscellaneous Other Topics (XI–XIV)
- Creativity (XI)
- Philosophical Definition/ Philosophy as Criticism (XII)
- Criticism and Evaluation (XIII)
- The Uses of Art (XIV)

Even this rough argumentative ordering would be misleading, however, as Dewey continuously circles back over topics, for example discussing aesthetic experience in Chapters XI and XIV as well as III. Throughout the treatments of various topics, however, two large themes guide the argument:

1. The artistic act is carried out for the sake of aesthetic experience; and
2. Aesthetic experience is the fulfillment and "redeeming" of human activity; its significance is a function of the activity with which it is bound up.

Making sense of *Art as Experience* is a matter of seeing exactly how these two large themes inform Dewey's distinctive approach, involving seeing "organic interrelatedness" everywhere, to the standard topics of the philosophy of art.

Aesthetic experience

The artistic is defined by Dewey in *Experience and Nature* as "all action that deals with materials and energies outside the body, assembling, refining, combining, and manipulating them until their new state yields a satisfaction not afforded by their crude condition – a formula that applies to fine and useful arts alike."[13] What is artistic is primarily an activity engaged in by a maker. *The aesthetic* is defined in contrast as "the delight that attends vision and hearing, an enhancement of the receptive appreciation and assimilation of objects irrespective of participation in the operations of production."[14] It is a matter of how an object, text, or performance – what Dewey calls an art product – is received in experience.

To say, then, that the artistic is for the sake of the aesthetic is to say that "to be truly artistic [and not just virtuous technical perfection] a work must also be esthetic – that is, framed for enjoyed receptive perception."[15] Following Kant's insight that "we *linger* over the consideration of the beautiful [in nature or in art] because this consideration strengthens and reproduces itself,"[16] Dewey holds that the art product is made *for* beholding or self-sustaining, attentive absorption. Dewey opposes the absorption in the art product that he characterizes, famously, as *consummatory* experience to the sort of "mere" sense experience that is marked by distraction and interruption, as, for example, when one finds oneself when reading distractedly noticing the shapes of the letters on the page or the pressure of the book on one's fingertips. In contrast, we have a consummatory experience, or what Dewey also calls *an* experience, "when the material experienced runs its course to fulfillment."[17] This course of properly aesthetic experience is narratable, in proceeding from beginning to middle to end, in a way that is intelligibly structured by the parts of the art product and their mode of organization. One finds oneself successively guided by the various parts, elements, or aspects of a work as one takes in over a period of time both the significance of individual details and how they contribute

to the whole, finally arriving at a sense of parts-significantly-contributing-to-wholeness.

There are many reasons why one might read, listen to, or look at any art product, including at least financial estimation, displaying one's class allegiances, or the seeking of "merely pleasant" distractions, as may be. But such modes of attention and experience are not what art is centrally *for*. Rather, "the 'eternal' quality of great art [that is, the power available to attentive observers across many accidents of time and place that distinguishes a work as exemplary art] is its renewed instrumentality for further consummatory experiences."[18] Experience, when it is aesthetic or consummatory, is self-sustaining and experienced as valuable, in integrating initial disturbance or attraction of attention into a larger temporal movement toward the grasping of an extended, organized whole. "That which distinguishes an experience as esthetic is conversion of resistance and tensions, of excitations that in themselves are temptations to diversion, into a movement toward an inclusive and fulfilling close."[19]

Artists are the continuous first audiences or monitors of their own work, as they check from moment to moment whether they are succeeding in organizing their materials in such a way as to invite and sustain this sort of experience.

> The artist embodies in himself the attitude of perceiver while he works ... A painter must consciously undergo the effect of his every brush stroke or he will not be aware of what he is doing and where his work is going ... Fulfilling, consummating are continuous functions, not mere ends, located at one place only. An engraver, painter, or writer is in process of completing at every stage of this work.[20]

The role of artist is, moreover, open to anyone who undertakes to make products with this end in view. Those distinguished as artists are simply those who, while making use of common human faculties of forming, attending, and monitoring, are especially persistent and successful in this undertaking. The roles of both artist and audience are open to anyone who has the opportunity either to produce or to attend to organized products that afford aesthetic experience.

The value of aesthetic experience – that, as it were, for the sake of which it is; that which makes it worth pursuing as an end – is that it serves as a kind of seduction to fuller life. "Through selection and organization those features that make any experience worth having

as an experience are prepared by art for commensurate perception."[21] That is, works of art help us to see what is or may be meaningful in life. Hence a work of art redeems experience as such and makes life worth living.

Dewey distinguishes aesthetic experiences of wholehearted involvement in active attention (whether in making or in receiving) not only from other "mere" sense experiences, but also from exercises of both "pure" intellect and "detached" technical skill. Ideally, both intellectual and practical experience should be aesthetic, for it is aesthetic experience that centrally and paradigmatically integrates attention and thought with attraction, pleasure, and desire. Against Kant, Dewey holds that "not absence of desire and thought but their thorough incorporation into perceptual experience characterizes esthetic experience, in its distinction from experiences that are especially 'intellectual' and 'practical.'"[22] It is this incorporation of both desire and thought into and within aesthetic experience that gives aesthetic experience its special, redemptive significance for human life. It lets us feel that we belong in a whole that invites and receives the full exercise of our integrated faculties, so that the pains of isolation that otherwise sometimes attend self-consciousness are overcome.

> A work of art elicits and accentuates this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all-inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live. This fact, I think, is the explanation of that feeling of exquisite intelligibility and clarity we have in the presence of an object that is experienced with aesthetic intensity ... We are, as it were, introduced into a world beyond this world which is nevertheless the deeper reality of the world in which we live in our ordinary experiences ... We are carried to a refreshed attitude toward the circumstances and exigencies of ordinary experience ... Just because it is a full and intense experience, [art] keeps alive the power to experience the common world in its fullness.[23]

Expression

While aesthetic experience is self-sustaining and pleasurable, it is not simply or merely self-sustaining and pleasurable. An artwork arises out of some disturbance in life, some felt need to make something in response to an experienced object, scene, or incident,

whether from within common life, within artistic tradition, or within both together. Insofar as we attend to the artwork's formal organization as an agentively rendered presentation and thematization, however abstract, of the phenomena of life that initiated its making, we receive the work also as an expressive object, where what is expressed in the work is an emotion toward the initiator. Emotions are, to begin with, *not* "things as simple and compact as are the words by which we name them. Joy, sorrow, hope, fear, anger, curiousity, are treated [wrongly] as if each in itself were a sort of entity that enters full-made upon the scene, an entity that may last a long time or a short time, but whose duration, whose growth and career, is irrelevant to its nature. In fact emotions are qualities, when they are significant, of a complex experience that moves and changes."[24] To say that emotions are qualities of a complex experience is to say that they are not essentially mere sensations that may sometimes be characterized by their intensity, duration, and quality alone (if even that is right about sensations). Rather, emotions inherently have an intentional object, or, better (in order to dissipate the air of "internalization"), an *attentional* object: an object, incident, or scene attended to that calls forth puzzlement, hope, anxiety, despair, and so on as may be.

Often we are, initially, unclear about exactly what we feel toward the object of attention, and why. What do I feel about the current political life of my nation, about the streetscape I see before me, or about the objects arrayed on my dining-room table, and what ought I to feel? To feel something, but not to know quite what, how, why, or whether it is appropriate, is to be oppressed by something. It is to have taken up somehow an attitudinal or emotional stance, but in a way that is inchoate. Following a view also held by Spinoza, Wordsworth, and Collingwood,[25] Dewey then holds that expression is the working through and testing of fit between feeling and attentional object. "Expression is the clarification of turbid emotion."[26] It is the work of arriving at better articulated, more self-consciously sustainable, and apter feeling.

Hence the expression of emotion is something quite different from its mere discharge. Dewey distinguishes, for example, between "only raging" in anger that has taken possession of the agent and "expressing rage," wherein the agent has taken possession of her anger. "While there is no expression, unless there is urge from

within outwards, the welling up must be clarified and ordered by taking into itself the values of prior experiences before it can be an act of expression ... Emotional discharge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of expression."[27] Beyond mere discharge, the act of artistic expression requires sustained and attentive involvement of the artist in working the materials of a medium to achieve a clarifying presentation of the initiator. Dewey usefully distinguishes between what is artificial (insincere and involving predeliberated manipulation of means toward an end), what is artful (clever, well-turned, witty), and what is artistic (expressive, involving the manipulation of materials in a medium for the sake of clarification). "The expression of the self in and through a medium, constituting the work of art, is *itself* a prolonged interaction of something issuing from the self with objective conditions, a process in which both of them acquire a form and order they did not at first possess."[28] Hence the successfully expressive artistic work will involve both the clarification of an initially turbid emotion and the achievement of an aesthetic satisfaction in the accomplishment of clarification. It may be rage that is expressed, but its successful expression will also involve a sense of delight and of ends accomplished in and through the expressing. "The emotion aroused attends the subject-matter that is perceived, thus differing from crude emotion because it is attached to the movement of the subject-matter toward consummation ... Through art, meanings of objects that are otherwise dumb, inchoate, restricted, and resisted are clarified and concentrated, and not by thought working laboriously upon them, not by escape in to a world of mere sense, but by creation of a new experience."[29]

Medium

Acts of expression are, for Dewey, not merely psychic. Expression requires working in a medium, and mere materials (pitches, daubs of paint, words, and so on) become media only when they are put successfully to expressive use.

> The connection between a medium and the act of expression is intrinsic. An act of expression always employs natural material, though it may be natural in the sense of habitual as well as in that of primitive or native. [This material]

becomes a medium when it is employed in view of its place and role, in its relations, [to achieve] an inclusive situation – as tones become music when ordered in a melody.[30]

It is not far off the mark to say that Dewey's distinctive emphasis on the fact that artistic thought and expression must occur in a medium is what enables him consistently to hold together the interrelated roles and functioning of form, expression, representation, and the overall significance of the work of art. Consistent with his metaphysics of the human being as always in continuous, dynamic interaction with nature and circumstance, Dewey holds that "the artist does his thinking in the very qualitative media he works in, and the terms lie so close to the object he is producing that they merge directly into it."[31] The result is that the work of art represents or presents its subject-matter in an iconic way, or as what in German is called *Darstellung*, essentially materially embodied and figural presentation, as opposed to *Vorstellung* or internalized "ideational" representation. Hence the presentational qualities of the work of art are different from both the "generalized" meanings of the statements of science, such as equations and diagrams, in having "a local habitation" in the work, and in their essential connection to the materials of a medium of expressive work, as in Wordsworth's presentation of his experience and emotions in "Tintern Abbey."[32] And this presentational quality is different, too, from that of a merely indicative signpost, say, having "purely external reference."[33] The materials of the medium as they have been organized by the artist enable the audience (like the artist herself) to experience something of the quality of the initiator, now in such a way that stance and emotion toward it are clarified. It is for this reason that Dewey endorses Aristotle's claim that works of art, including paradigmatically works of architecture and even purely instrumental music (and, presumably, abstract paintings) are mimetically presentational.[34]

The task of the artist is, then, not simply to represent indicatively or assertationally, but rather to represent expressively and for the sake of aesthetic experience alike, *by* "finding the exact qualitative media that fuse most completely with what is to be expressed."[35] "This interfusion of all properties of the medium is necessary if the object in question is to serve the whole creature in his unified vitality"[36] – if, that is, it is successfully to do its expressive and aesthetic work.

Form and/as tertiary quality

It is not adequate simply to juxtapose materials in a medium (pitches, words, daubs of paint, bodily motions, etc.). Artists are, rather, masters of arrangement; they achieve organizations of elements so that there are in the work features "rhythmic each to each."[37] Audience members are invited to be aware simultaneously of particular elements as particular – of this particular motif, this particular image, occurring just here – and yet of their place in a larger whole. "In a work of art, different acts, episodes, occurrences melt and fuse into unity, and yet do not disappear and lose their own character as they do so ... Mutual adaptation of parts to one another in constituting a whole is the relation which, formally speaking, characterizes a work of art."[38]

Success in formal arrangement, while it requires patience and craft, is nonetheless not achievable simply through following fixed rules of art. Dewey opposes both stale neoclassicisms of fixed rules and "flat" naturalisms of "literal" representation. Instead, the arrangement must be achieved in and through specific attention to the initiator and to the presentational possibilities of the medium. There must be, through the organizing of materials in a medium into a form, "a fulfilling of impulsions and tensions"[39] that initially arose from the initiator itself.

Importantly, formal features of works are features *of the work*; they are no more merely projected or artificial than are either the secondary qualities or forms of things in nature. The aesthetic tertiary qualities – qualities of how secondary qualities such as color are arranged – of natural situations are just as real as their primary qualities: the "stir and thrill in us is as much theirs [natural objects'] as is length, breadth, and thickness."[40] So, too, for stirs and thrills of art, rooted in formal arrangement of materials in a medium.

Evaluation and interpretation

Because the attentional objects of aesthetic experience are real features of the arrangement of art products, evaluation and aesthetic judgment are properly rooted in discernment of such features. One must look *to* the work as one attentively apprehends it, not to either external authorities or rules and precedents disjoined from and

authoritative over one's experience of the work. "The critic, if he is wise, even in making pronouncements of good and bad, of great and small in value, will lay more emphasis upon the objective traits that sustain his judgment than upon values in the sense of excellent and poor."[41] The proper function of criticism is neither rhapsodizing nor detached verdict-issuing. It is rather accounting for one's own aesthetic experience of absorbed following of the sense of the work through attention to its formal and semantic features. This accounting aims both at stabilizing one's own responses and at helping others to share in them. Criticism is hence, as Arnold Isenberg and Stanley Cavell have also argued, essentially perceptualist, offering what Isenberg called "directions for perceiving"[42] the work. Or as Dewey puts it, "the function of criticism is the reeducation of perception of works of art."[43]

Both because it aims at stabilizing one's own attentive aesthetic experience and because it must respond to "the qualitative novelty that characterizes every genuine work of art," "artistic criticism is always determined by the quality of first-hand perception."[44] Borrowing verdicts from others will not do. "Second-hand" criticism is "judicial" and "legalistic" in often proceeding from "subconscious self-distrust and a consequent appeal to authority."[45] It shirks the work of accounting for one's felt response to the singular, essentially embodied, sense-making capacity of successful works of art.

Communication and society

Works of art are made by human agents, sometimes jointly, sometimes individually. The emotional significance in relation to initiators and the capacity for supporting absorbed attention that characterizes them have everything to do with their being made by persons with emotional attitudes and with possibilities of being absorbed in the arrangement of materials. These features would not be in the work were they not the result of the craft and emotional life of an agent or agents. But works of art are nonetheless inherently communicative, inherently able to find audiences of some scope. "A poem and a picture present material passed through the alembic of personal experience ... But, nonetheless, their material came from the public world and so has qualities in common with the material of

other experiences, while the product awakens in other persons new perceptions of the meanings of the common world ... Because the objects of art are expressive, they communicate."[46] Both the initiators and the materials for forming a presentation of them and an emotional response to them are inevitably drawn from a common world. For this reason, for example, a continuously shifting vernacular is an inevitable and desirable background informing every work of literary art.[47]

For the audience, works of art are also means of sharing in the point of view of its maker or makers, especially of sharing in the work of achieving an absorptive presentation of a fuller, clearer, and more stable emotional stance toward an initiator. Hence they are means for audience members, too, to come to fuller, clearer, and more stable emotional stances toward objects of a common world. "Works of art are means by which we enter, through imagination and the emotions they evoke, into other forms of relationship and participation than our own."[48] Because they achieve not only a presentation of the fact, as it were, of the initiator, but also and more importantly the clarification of the initiator's significance in relation to emotional life and to habits of response, and because this clarificatory work results in a densely absorbing art product that holds attention, works of art are more powerful instruments of communication than relatively generalizing, relatively more medium-independent, and relatively more emotion-independent "statements." Hence, "art is the most effective mode of communication that exists."[49] It is denser and more absorbing than statement, and it bears emotional as well as "informational" significance. Formally regarded, artworks in their densities, specificities, and clarificatory emotional significances defeat cliché. By doing so, they remind us that expressions of genuinely felt meaningfulness are possible, and they show that at least some aspects of a common world can support felt response and its expression. "Art throws off the covers that hide the expressiveness of experienced things; it quickens us from the slackness of routine and enables us to forget ourselves by finding ourselves in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms."[50] To adapt a phrase that J. M. Bernstein has suggested characterizes the achievement of modernist art generally, it is as though successful works say, effectively, "here, after all, is meaning," thus "defeating thinghood."[51]

Philosophy and/as criticism

Throughout *Art as Experience*, Dewey undertakes continuously to attend to the multiple practices of art and to the activities of making and receiving art, as these practices and activities have interfused formal, material, presentational, and emotional dimensions. Neither the philosophy of art nor art criticism can, in Dewey's view, properly "fix" the parameters of the development of these practices and activities absolutely. Instead, continuous attention to development is required, in philosophy and criticism alike. "If art is an intrinsic quality of an activity, we cannot divide and subdivide it. We can only *follow the differentiation of the activity* into different modes *as it impinges* on different materials and employs different media."[52] Both in philosophy and in art criticism, attempting to fix parameters absolutely – something Dewey stigmatizes as Platonism – is a misbegotten effort at "fleeing from experience to a metaphysical realm."[53] If this flight is to be avoided and experience embraced, then philosophy will have to become more like criticism; however much they undertake to analyze and clarify concepts, philosophers must in doing so learn to pay attention to development, sorting out good from bad, authentic from meretricious, central from marginal, and so on only in relation to a grasp of artistic development that they have achieved historically and in the specific medium of philosophical writing, which will and should never come to an end. "The interpenetration of old and new, their complete blending in a work of art, is another challenge issued by art to philosophic thought. It gives a clew to the nature of things that philosophic systems have rarely followed."[54] Philosophers have been all too prone to seek absolutes, where in fact what is centrally and properly of interest and importance sometimes significantly changes, and where the commitments (conceptual and otherwise) that are in furtherance of fluency and satisfaction in activity are themselves subject to change. "Mind changes slowly through the joint tuition of interest and circumstance ... [Consciousness] is the continuous readjustment of self and the world in experience."[55] To the extent that this is so, making and responding to art, with its formal and material densities of attention to initiators as significant objects of emotion, are models for philosophical activity as such, in its attentions to life.

CULTURAL PERFECTIONISM AND DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM: DEWEY VS. ARTISTIC MODERNISM

Throughout his philosophical writing, Dewey maintains two very broad stances that come jointly into particular prominence in his philosophy of art: cultural perfectionism and democratic pluralism. A central difficulty that then troubles Dewey's philosophy is that it is not clear exactly how compatible these two stances are. A central strength of his philosophy is that it is not clear that we would do well to do without either of them.

Cultural perfectionism is the thought that we are not simply to accept habits of practice and activity as they stand. Instead we are to do better than we now mostly do. We are to become more actively emotionally involved in our activities and practices, more wholehearted in our commitments, and so less alienated in what we do and less willing to settle for merely sensory and consumerist, largely escapist, "satisfactions." Through active participation in the continuing reformation of cultural and practical life – that is, through participation in what in German is called *Bildung*: education-formation culture – we may come to find fluency and meaning in what we do, to find happiness in activity rather than in consumption. Making and responding to art offer, for Dewey, central models of meaningful activity in somewhat fallen times.

Cultural perfectionism typically takes one of two forms: conservative-nostalgic-fundamentalist or modernist-formalist.[56] In the first form, the effort is to reestablish cultural practices anterior to pluralized-pluralizing modernity, with all the chaos that it entails. Such reestablishments might occur through the reinvigoration of certain forms of religious consciousness and practice, as in T. S. Eliot's late Anglicanism, or they might take the form of insistences on the discipline of productive work regulated by competent managers (as in Daniel Bell's *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*), or they might take the form of insistence on standards of taste, as in Hilton Kramer's pleas for a "new criterion." Institutionalized religion, disciplined work, and expert traditional critical judgment are here variously posed as bulwarks against a growing storm of chaos. A difficulty that troubles this view is that it may be unrealistically nostalgic and baselessly authoritarian. In the

second, more modernist form, there is a flight *to* abstraction and formal art, specifically away from the evacuations of significance from "accessible" representational art that have been wrought by advertising and commodity culture. This flight reinforces a separation of spheres – art vs. politics vs. science – that has entailed a lack of "liturgicality" and "thick commitment" in social life generally. Form and abstraction, it is hoped, might afford possibilities of meaningfulness that are "abstracted from" the decadent currents of social life. This modernist-formalist strain of the pursuit of meaning appears in the writers we think of as classical modernists such as early Eliot, Pound, Joyce, and Woolf. More broadly yet, this way of thinking about fullness of meaning as a function of form characterizes the rise of so-called absolute, non-text-based music as a central form of art from roughly 1780 on.[57] Meaning is to be achieved "otherwise" than through "normal presentation"; centrally it is to be achieved through self-sustaining, self-referential form. A difficulty that troubles this view is that it tends either to promote an escapist, individualist-hedonic form of "self-realization" that leaves everything in social life as it is, or to revert to an authoritarian mandarinism.

Democratic pluralism is the thought that we are to improve our valuing, and so the activities that our valuing informs and sustains, from "where we are." Claims to expertise in valuing from "outside the cave" or from the realms of intellect alone are baseless. Nothing could show that something is worth caring about other than the fact that someone does care about it in practice now, perhaps with the qualification that the practice of caring is to be intelligent. A difficulty of this view, given the pluralization of social life and so of routines of caring, is that it, too, threatens to leave consumerism, hedonism, and "chaotic" individualism in place. If more or less equal respect is to be accorded to the views of more or less everyone, without distinguished and distinctive experts, then there will, it seems, just be a market that adjusts the prices of alternative products (cultural-artistic and otherwise), where that market will reflect alternative forms of consumer valuing, rather than any common culture of deeply shared, meaningful, wholeheartedly felt commitments.[58]

The difficulty that Dewey's philosophy of art faces is then that it is unclear that democratic pluralism is compatible with cultural perfectionism in either its conservative or modernist form. How,

exactly, are we to begin from where we are in our value stances and yet to improve and perfect those stances and the activities they support, without either fundamentalist reversions or modernist formal iconoclasms?

Dewey recognizes the difficulty here, and he faces up to it by urging two continuity theses: ordinary experience (*aesthesis* in the sense of sensation) is continuous with artistic experience (aesthetic experience in the sense of consummatory experience), and primitive, less technologically advanced cultural life is continuous with advanced technology and "high" civilization. In each case, the latter is immanent in the former; both consummatory experience and civilized life are natural and fruitful developments out of already existing experiences and practices. And in each case the former serves as a continuing resource for overcoming tendencies to artificiality, mandarinism, and formalism in the latter. Both ordinary sense experience and more "natural," less advanced practices of life activity can and should be taken up in both "advanced" art and "civilized" life.

Dewey asserts these continuity theses directly and powerfully in several important passages early on in *Art as Experience*. Instead of occupying "a niche apart," artworks are originally "enhancements of the processes of everyday life."[59] "A peculiar esthetic 'individualism'"[60] is the result only of modern industrial conditions. We should not "spiritualize" artworks, but instead should adopt "a conception that discloses the way in which these works idealize qualities found in common experience."[61] We must come to accept that "the esthetic is no intruder in experience from without, whether by way of idle luxury or transcendent ideality, but that it is the clarified and intensified development of traits that belong to every normally complete experience."[62] Above all, the problem of making continuities evident – continuities between ordinary life and artistic experience and between "primitive" and "advanced" forms of life – is a practical problem that can be effectively taken up centrally within the practices of art itself.

> The problem of conferring esthetic quality upon all modes of production is a serious problem. But it is a human problem for human solution; not a problem incapable of solution because it is set by some unpassable gulf in human nature or in the nature of things. In an imperfect society – and no society will ever be perfect – fine art will be to some extent an escape from, or an adventitious decoration of, the main activities of living. But in a

better-ordered society than that in which we live, an infinitely greater happiness than is now the case would attend all modes of production. We live in a world in which there is an immense amount of organization, but it is an external organization, not one of the ordering of a growing experience, one that involves, moreover, the whole of the live creature, toward a fulfilling conclusion ... The remaking of the material of experience in the act of expression is not [properly] an isolated event confined to the artist and to a person here and there who happens to enjoy the work. In the degree in which art exercises its office, it is also a remaking of the experience of the community in the direction of greater order and unity.[63]

This is a powerful vision, powerfully expressed, of the practical offices of art. As Thomas Alexander observes, "meaning," and above all artistic meaning-making, is for Dewey, "the ongoing process of trying to make sense"[64] – more specifically to make sense out of current materials of practical and social life. The problem that remains, however, is that this vision flies in the face of artistic modernism, where the imperative is to "stop making sense" in the face of the ossified, inauthentic procedures and products of all too predictable sense-making that are dominant in industrial, bureaucratic, commodity society: make form instead, in order to "make sense otherwise." Jürgen Habermas diagnoses the difficulty acutely in commenting on a 1937 Berlin workers' art project that was motivated by the Deweyan thought that "a reified everyday praxis can be cured only by creating unconstrained interaction of the cognitive with the moral-practical and the aesthetic-expressive elements"[65] of social life. But exactly how, Habermas goes on to wonder, might such unconstrained interaction be created? "If I am not mistaken, the chances for this today are not very good. More or less in the entire Western world a climate has developed that furthers capitalist modernization processes as well as trends of cultural modernism."[66] As a result, a relative "backgrounding" of a "scrutable" semantic dimension is required in works of art, if they are genuinely to make sense otherwise, against the grain of industrial-commodity society. It is for this reason that Adorno regarded successful art as inherently an "enigma" involving the "identification of the nonidentical" and a "protest against the ignominy of the eversame."[67]

Given his continuity theses, Dewey does not share in the modernist vision of either art or the social conditions that make difficult modernist art necessary. In all of *Art as Experience*, there is no

mention of Eliot, Pound, Stevens, or Williams; no Kafka, Faulkner, or Joyce; no Stravinsky, Bartok, Mahler, Schönberg, Berg, Webern, Debussy, or Ravel; and no Picasso, to mention only some major figures who overlapped with Dewey's long life. Among major modern painters of the twentieth century, only Cézanne and Matisse receive substantial treatment, and they are praised more for the quality of their perception of life than for their form-making.

Stanley Cavell, while acknowledging what he calls "the thrill of certain moments of Dewey's philosophy,"[68] expresses sharply a sense of disappointment both in Dewey's perceptions of modern life and in the remedies Dewey proposes for it. Cavell recalls

> my growing feeling about Dewey's work, as I went through what seemed countless of his books, that Dewey was remembering something philosophy should mostly be, but that the world he was responding to missed the worlds I seemed to live in, missing the heights of modernism in the arts, the depth of psychoanalytic discovery, the ravages of the century's politics, the wild intelligence of American popular culture. Above all, missing the question, and the irony in philosophy's questioning, whether philosophy, however reconstructed, was any longer possible, and necessary, in this world.[69]

If one shares Cavell's perception of the ravages of the modern world and of the wildnesses of art's responses to it, Dewey's continuity theses can seem obtuse. To address modern social fractures and fragmentations of experience by developing a general metaphysics of experience and art can seem like trying to repair a wall by adding mortar to a disorganized heap of bricks.

And yet: there are some things that can be said nonetheless in behalf of Dewey's vision. First, if we are to have any chance of living and meaning more fully, intensely, and adequately than we now do, then we shall have to imagine better modalities of life constructively. "Imagination is the chief instrument of the good ... Only imaginative vision elicits possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual."[70] Second, imagination has been exercised in an exemplary way in successful art. "Art has been the means of keeping alive the sense of purposes that outrun evidence and of meanings that transcend indurated habit."[71] Art is not the sole means of this transcendence, since it surely can and should be achieved in friendship, family life, politics, and science, among other practices, and not everyone can or should be a modernist poet, painter, or composer.

Contra Dewey, art is *not* "the sole alternative to luck."[72] Yet art is, when it goes well, nonetheless an exemplary means of this transcendence that may further inspire creative and more just friendship, family life, politics, and science, however interruptively, as may be. It follows that art is at least an exemplary means of the perfection of human life. "Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need, impulse, and action characteristic of the live creature."[73] It gives dense material embodiment to initiator-provoked, imaginative visions of human possibilities and to emotional stances toward possibilities and initiators alike. In a thought that Dewey shares with his modernist critics, exemplary works of art are central proofs of human powers.

NOTES

1. N. Carroll, *Philosophy of Art: A Contemporary Introduction* (London: Routledge 1999), p. 258.
2. G. Sircello, "Arguing about 'Art'," in *Language and Aesthetics*, ed. B. Tilghman (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973), pp. 84–85. See also R. Eldridge, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1–24, 258–63.
3. J. E. Tiles, *Dewey* (London: Routledge. 1988), p. 198.
4. J. Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934), *LW* 10:9.
5. J. Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1925), *LW* 1:271.
6. J. Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *MW* 12:152.
7. J. Dewey, "Outline of a Critical Theory of Ethics" (1891), *EW* 3:383; my emphasis added.
8. Tiles, *Dewey*, p. 187.
9. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 199.
10. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 9.
11. T. M. Alexander, *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience, and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 118.
12. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 268.
13. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 267.
14. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 267.
15. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 54.
16. I. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. P. Guyer and E. Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), §12, p. 107. For a general discussion of absorption as a central feature of

artistic experience with reference to Kant and Monroe Beardsley, see Eldridge, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art*, pp. 57–66.

17. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 42.
18. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 274.
19. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 67–68.
20. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 55, 52, 62–3.
21. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 190.
22. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 258.
23. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 199, 144, 138.
24. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 48.
25. For a comparative discussion of Spinoza, Wordsworth, Collingwood, and Dewey on expression, see Eldridge, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art*, pp. 68–101.
26. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 83.
27. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 67.
28. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 71.
29. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 261–262, 138.
30. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 69–70.
31. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 21.
32. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 96.
33. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 89.
34. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 225. For a discussion of Aristotle on mimetic representationality with particular reference to purely instrumental music, see Eldridge, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art*, pp. 25–31.
35. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 264.
36. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 122.
37. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 176.
38. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 43, 140. Compare Monroe Beardsley's account – surely derived from Dewey – of works of art as bearers of *unity, intensity, and complexity* in virtue of the overall organization or texture of the work in M. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* 2nd edn (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1971). For comparison of Dewey with Beardsley, see Eldridge, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art*, pp. 57–67.
39. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 167.
40. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 91.
41. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 312–313.
42. A. Isenberg, "Critical Communication," *Philosophical Review* 57 (1949), 330–344; Compare S. Cavell, "Aesthetic Problems of Modern Philosophy," in *Must We Mean What We Say?*, ed. S. Cavell (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969). For discussion of Dewey's

perceptualist picture of criticism in comparison with Isenberg, see Eldridge, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art*, pp. 142–146.

43. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 328.
44. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 292, 302.
45. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 303.
46. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 88, 110.
47. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 244.
48. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 336.
49. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 291.
50. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 110.
51. J. M. Bernstein, "Aesthetics, Modernism, Literature: Cavell's Transformations of Philosophy," in *Stanley Cavell*, ed. R. Eldridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 119.
52. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 218; my emphasis added.
53. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 218.
54. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 293.
55. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 270.
56. In this paragraph, I largely follow Jürgen Habermas's analysis of some perceptions of "failures of modernity" in his "Modernity: An Incomplete Project," in *The Anti-aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. H. Foster and trans. S. Benhabit (Port Townsend, WA: Bay Press, 1983), pp. 6–8.
57. See C. Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. R. Lustig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), for a fuller story along these lines of the rise of absolute music.
58. John Carey, chief book reviewer for *The Sunday Times* of London and former Oxford professor of literature, announces and celebrates the emergence of a fully pluralized and economized aesthetic culture in J. Carey, *What Good Are the Arts?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
59. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 12.
60. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 15.
61. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 17.
62. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 52–53.
63. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 87.
64. Alexander, *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience, and Nature*, p. xviii.
65. Habermas, "Modernity," p. 13.
66. Habermas, "Modernity," p. 13.
67. T. W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. R. Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 22, 23.
68. S. Cavell, *In Quest of the Ordinary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 14.

69. S. Cavell, *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome: The Constitution of Emersonian Perfectionism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 13.
70. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 350, 348.
71. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 350, 348.
72. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 279.
73. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 31.

12 Dewey's philosophy of education: a critique from the perspective of care theory

Care theorists owe much to John Dewey and his prescriptions for progressive education. Although there are problems for feminists in pragmatism, they may be remedied. As Virginia Held has said, "[w]e would ... have to transform pragmatism."[1] We would have to enlarge (or at least elaborate further) the pragmatist conception of experience; in particular, we would have to include women's experience in a careful and deliberate way.

As we examine Dewey's ideas on education, we find much to appreciate. But there seems to be a pervasive lack of attention to *relations* as they are described in care theory. Dewey has much to say about the individual and the community, but he rarely digs beneath the two to locate what care theorists take to be ontologically basic – the dyadic relation – and his discussion of thinking may be too narrowly confined to scientific thinking.

In this brief and appreciative critique, I look at five important topics in his philosophy of education: the child, the curriculum, learning and inquiry, democracy, and moral education.

THE CHILD

Possibly the most often misinterpreted of Dewey's lines appear in *The School and Society*: "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy."[2] He did not mean by this that all children should have exactly the same curriculum – one devised by the "best and wisest parent." Taken as a whole, Dewey's writings on education make it clear that the best and wisest parents would want for each

child the education best suited to that individual child. Such parents will insist on adequate resources for every child and an organization of schooling that will introduce all children to life in a democratic community. The education recommended by Dewey recognizes, in general, the active nature of children, but it also identifies important differences in individual children.

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey agreed with Rousseau on the matter of individual differences:

> The general aim translates into the aim of regard for individual differences among children. Nobody can take the principle of consideration of native powers into account without being struck by the fact that these powers differ in different individuals. The difference applies not merely to their intensity, but even more to their quality and arrangement.[3]

Dewey went on to emphasize the importance of working with "preferences and interests," noting that these wax and wane. He agreed with Rousseau that education should attend to natural capacities and interests, but he cautioned that not all natural tendencies are desirable, and he parted company with Rousseau exactly here. Dewey did not believe that children are born naturally good; nor did he believe that they are born tainted by sin from which they require salvation. Dewey's view of children is practical, supported empirically: children differ in their interests and capacities; they have inclinations toward both good and evil; they are active, social creatures whose worthy interests should be identified, encouraged, and guided.

In discussing child development, Dewey identified four great childhood interests:

> Keeping in mind these fourfold interests – the interest in conversation or communication; in inquiry, or finding out things; in making things, or construction; and artistic expression – we may say they are the natural resources, the uninvested capital, upon the exercise of which depends the active growth of the child.[4]

While children are engaged in these activities, they are at the same time having inner experiences:

> The real child ... lives in the world of imaginative values and ideas which find only imperfect outward embodiment. We hear much nowadays about the cultivation of the child's "imagination." Then we undo much of our own talk and work by a belief that the imagination is some special part of the child

that finds its satisfaction in some one particular direction – generally speaking, that of the unreal and make-believe, of the myth and made-up story.[5]

Dewey put the question directly to his audience:

Why are we so hard of heart and so slow to believe? The imagination is the medium in which the child lives ... Shall we ignore this native setting and tendency, dealing not with the living child at all, but with the dead image we have erected, or shall we give it play and satisfaction?[6]

Given this powerful plea for recognition of the child's imaginative life, it is odd that he has been accused of recommending a social studies curriculum that is too mundane to interest anyone. Criticizing the "expanding horizons" curriculum credited to Dewey (but this could be debated [7]), Kieran Egan writes:

If one considers what most engages young children's minds, it is surely stories about monsters, witches, dragons, star-warriors, and princesses in distant times and places, rather than the subject matter, however actively engaged, of families, local environments, and communities ... The young child's immediate surroundings, then, are too taken-for-granted to be meaningfully explored.[8]

This argument is by no means settled. Dewey would probably answer Egan by saying that children's immediate surroundings are loaded with interest and opportunities to exercise imagination. It is our choice of pedagogy – of interaction with chosen content – that makes the subject-matter boring and lifeless. Indeed, he did address this criticism in *How We Think*:

To the child the homely activities going on about him are not utilitarian devices for accomplishing physical ends; they exemplify a wonderful world, the depths of which he has not sounded, a world full of the mystery and promise that attend all the doings of the grown-ups whom he admires.[9]

For Dewey, imagination is "not a flight into the purely fanciful and ideal, but a method of expanding and filling in what is real."[10] Perhaps, however, he gave too little attention to the fanciful and the mysterious. Martin Gardner said of Dewey that he lacked a sense of the numinous: "Nothing seems to have mystified Dewey. Never, so far as I can recall, did he see anything tragic or comic or absurd about the human condition. We are all organisms interacting with our environment, and that's that."[11]

However, it may be that it is just Dewey's *language* that is devoid of the color we associate with the numinous. In many places, he encourages us to blur the lines between labor and leisure, work and play, culture and utility, seeing imagination at work everywhere. He urged educators to see imagination and pleasure in scientific work and utility in the arts. But we must admit that he said little about the role of stories, poetry, and make-believe in the lives of children.

Another of Dewey's concepts, *growth*, is central to his view of childhood and immaturity. For Dewey, immaturity is to be valued for its potential. However, it is a mistake, he wrote in *Democracy and Education*, to suppose that growth or development is "a movement toward a fixed goal. Growth is regarded as *having* an end, instead of *being* an end."[12] Dewey wanted education to proceed in such a way that students would remain eager for further education. Today (as in Dewey's day) we often hold as an ideal "lifelong learning" but, as Dewey warned, we teach in ways that are likely to make people glad to be finished with schooling.

We cannot press Dewey with the question, "Growth toward what?" because he has warned us that growth is an end in itself. But how do we evaluate growth? In *Experience and Education*, Dewey gave some help on this with an example of a man who becomes more proficient as a burglar. This proficiency cannot be regarded as growth because it may well close down future possibilities for growth. Dewey proposed this test: "Does this form of growth create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli, and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions?"[13] But the answer to this question is not as easy as the burglar example makes it seem. Parents and teachers are often concerned when a child becomes immersed in one interest or activity over a prolonged period of time. A boy may be gaining computer skills, for example, but is he developing as a social being? A girl may be a talented dancer, but is she reading enough?

On questions such as these, care theorists find Dewey too vague. Sara Ruddick points out how difficult the problems may be: "The mind of a mother fostering growth is marked by a sense of children's complexity and of the difficulties of responding confidently to them."[14] She gives examples of questions that trouble mothers:

> Should a child be allowed to stay indoors all weekend when all the other children are out playing? Should children be forced for their own good where they fear to go – into classrooms or to birthday parties, for example? ... When is allowing a child to grow "naturally" a cover for impotence in the face of her will?[15]

Ruddick devotes a full chapter to the complexities of fostering growth – how protecting the child may conflict with encouraging growth, how attempts to shape a child may impede or foster growth. And care theorists are willing to identify the directions in which growth should move. Even if we agree with Dewey that the aims thereby sought are not ends completed, accomplished, finished for good, but always ideals that provide continuous progress – still we are willing to name and discuss them.[16] We will return to the place of growth in a discussion of Dewey's theory of inquiry.

Care theory puts great emphasis on relationships and, although Dewey wrote much about community and democracy, he said little about dyadic relations. In contrast, care theorists believe that the teacher–student relation is central in education.[17] We may prefer Deweyan inquiry methods and the full, active participation of students in their own learning, but we acknowledge that caring teachers may produce fine results with rather old-fashioned methods – if they establish and maintain caring relations with their students.

THE CURRICULUM

Dewey's view of curriculum is often called "child-centered," but this is inaccurate.[18] In a work as early as 1902, *The Child and the Curriculum*, Dewey criticized both the "new," permissive form of education that people have persisted in attributing to him and the "old" education that subordinated the child to the curriculum. He insisted that "the child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process."[19] The child and the curriculum must interact.

Later, in *Experience and Education*, he again argued against an either/or approach to the child and the curriculum. He described the principles of the new (progressive) education appreciatively:

> To imposition from above is opposed expression and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is opposed free activity; to learning from texts and

teachers, learning from experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques by drill, is opposed acquisition of them as means of attaining ends which make direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is opposed making the most of opportunities of present life; to static aims and materials is opposed acquaintance with a changing world.[20]

But, Dewey warned, everything depends on how these principles are filled out in practice:

> The general philosophy of the new education may be sound, and yet the difference in abstract principles will not decide the way in which the moral and intellectual preference involved shall be worked out in practice. There is always the danger in a new movement that in rejecting the aims and methods of that which it would supplant, it may develop its principles negatively rather than positively and constructively.[21]

Dewey's curriculum linked child and subject-matter. Geography was of special interest: "The unity of all the sciences is found in geography. The significance of geography is that it presents the earth as the enduring home of the occupations of man."[22] This view of geography led Dewey to an emphasis on occupations – on doing things, making things, thinking about what is involved in securing resources, inventing and using tools. Dewey deplored the kind of geography usually taught in schools: names and locations of cities, rivers, mountains, etc. – filling children up with inert facts. But it is not clear how much time should be spent on "occupations" and how teachers can be sure that the basic content and structure emerge from these activities. Years later, Jerome Bruner offered a similar critique of traditional methods but suggested a solution based directly on the major concepts and structures of the disciplines.[23] Despite an occasional burst of creative ideas on curriculum, the schools persist to this day mainly with text, lecture, and test methods.

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey made two important, specific suggestions for the history curriculum – increased emphasis on industrial history and on intellectual history. The first fits well with the corresponding emphasis on doing, making things, and finding out how things work. The second, if put into practice, should help to integrate the curriculum. Intellectual history should find a place in every subject, thus making it more likely that students find meaning in their studies. Both recommendations are made by care theory as well, but care theorists and many other feminists suggest an even

greater change in the curriculum.[24] They charge that important topics associated with female work and family life are given little or no attention in the school curriculum. Matters crucial to human flourishing rarely appear in school studies: making a home, parenting, religion, caring for plants and animals. Curriculum thinking inspired by care theory is more radical than that advanced by Dewey.

Perhaps the most damaging criticism leveled at Dewey's curriculum philosophy is that it is "anti-intellectual." As Sidney Hook has commented, the criticism is bizarre. Indeed, Dewey's philosophy lays such emphasis on thinking, planning, reflecting, interpreting, and evaluating – the methods of intelligence – that a more just complaint would be that it puts too great a demand on teachers' intellectual capacities.

The underlying cause of this misinterpretation seems to be the longstanding belief that school subjects can be ranked by the inherent strength of their intellectual content. Dewey tried throughout his career to counter this faulty belief. In *How We Think*, he wrote:

> It is desirable to expel ... the notion that some subjects are inherently "intellectual" and hence possessed of an almost magical power to train the faculty of thought ... Thinking is ... a power of following up and linking together the specific suggestions that specific things arouse. Accordingly, any subject, from Greek to cooking, and from drawing to mathematics, is intellectual, if intellectual at all, not in its fixed inner structure, but in its function – in its power to start and direct significant inquiry and reflection. What geometry does for one, the manipulation of laboratory apparatus, the mastery of a musical composition, or the conduct of a business affair, may do for another.[25]

Dewey made this point repeatedly; it is central to his philosophy. The intellectual quality of educational experience lies not in the curriculum content itself but in the vital interaction between student and subject-matter.

Because of his insistence that any subject can be intellectual and because he so often used the words *occupation* and *vocation*, it is often supposed that Dewey was an advocate of vocational education. His position is somewhat confusing. He did want the schools to help in preparing students to find an appropriate occupation or "calling." In *Democracy and Education*, he wrote: "To find out what one is fitted to do and to secure an opportunity to do it is the key to happiness. Nothing is more tragic than failure to discover one's true

business in life, or to find that one has drifted or been forced by circumstances into an uncongenial calling."[26] But he opposed vocational education as it then appeared in schools: "There is a danger that vocational education will be interpreted in theory and practice as trade education: as a means of securing technical efficiency in specified future pursuits."[27] He advocated education *through* occupations and education for vocations but drew back from education construed as preparation for a trade or narrowly defined occupation. His fear was that such education would perpetuate the status quo with respect to occupational and economic hierarchies.

Instead of rejecting vocational education as preparation for a specific occupation, Dewey could have discussed how to augment such courses of study with cultural activities that might enrich whole lives, if not occupational endeavors. Care theory is more sensitive to the plight of those who must do unpleasant, boring, or physically difficult but necessary work – perhaps because, in general, women have for centuries been caught up in work "forced by circumstances." Since our society will likely always need such work done, an important aim of schooling should be to prepare all students for a fulfilling life beyond their occupation. A second, fundamentally important, aim is to instill in all students a deep appreciation and respect for all those who do the essential work of our society.[28] In this area – preparing students fully for occupational life – care theory finds significant lacks in Dewey's recommendations.

LEARNING AND INQUIRY

There has been much debate over Dewey's concept of inquiry. Did he reduce all inquiry to scientific method? Did he misconstrue scientific method? Was he tainted by idealism? Was he actually a realist? These questions and similar ones directed at Dewey's basic philosophical ideas are addressed in other chapters in this volume. Here we are interested in the role envisioned by Dewey for inquiry in schooling.

To make sense of Dewey's philosophy of education, we have to consider how his basic concepts fit together. *Inquiry* for Dewey is the means by which *growth* is maintained. I noted earlier that the idea of growth is vague from the standpoint of practical pedagogy, and that claim stands. But it holds a central place in Dewey's biological/naturalistic framework. It provides "one exemplification of the principle

of continuity."[29] The principle of continuity tells us simply that a person's experiences are linked together, but this linking may be a haphazard chronological set of happenings or it may be continuity as exemplified by growth; that is, the latter type of continuity in educational experience increases the student's power to engage in further activities that will count as *experience*.

Again, it is not possible to discuss Dewey's theory of experience fully here. For educators, the important point is that an *experience* has an external aspect – some activity in the world – and an internal aspect – an affective impact or meaning for the individual. Some daily happenings – mindless doings and under-goings – do not qualify as experience at all, and not all experiences are educationally worthwhile. In *Experience and Education*, Dewey said:

> Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other ... Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness. Then the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted.[30]

We might wish Dewey had said more here. It seems likely that callousness may reduce the quality of interaction with other human beings; social experience may well be restricted. But it is conceivable that other avenues of growth will remain open, even grow. Dewey continues: "Again, a given experience may increase a person's automatic skill in a particular direction and yet tend to land him in a groove or rut; the effect again is to narrow the field of further experience."[31]

Dewey did not claim that an increase in automatic skill is necessarily bad, although many educators have taken him to mean this and that they should banish all drill and memorization from the classroom. Wise teachers will generate questions of the sort: When is drill facilitative? How much is too much? And they will ask the question implied in Dewey's warning: Where will this acquisition of skill lead?

Dewey's comments so far can be taken as criticism of the rigid, mindless, and sometimes harsh methods associated with traditional education, but he also expressed concerns that might be directed at the new education:

> An experience may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote the formation of a slack and careless attitude; this attitude then operates to modify the quality of subsequent experiences so as to prevent a person from getting out

of them what they have to give. Again, experiences may be so disconnected from one another that, while each is agreeable or even exciting in itself, they are not linked cumulatively to one another. Energy is dissipated and a person becomes scatter-brained.[32]

Dewey wanted educators to be guided by the principle of continuity as exemplified in growth. But this increases the complexity of teaching. A teacher may, for example, provide for her class an "experience" that follows logically on past activities. However, what the teacher provides is not an *experience* as Dewey defined it. That is something had by the one experiencing it. The teacher provides opportunities for students to interact with subject-matter and thereby have an experience. *Interaction* is Dewey's "second chief principle for interpreting an experience in its educational function and force."[33] The idea is to give balanced attention to both internal and external aspects of experience. Teachers can provide opportunities for students to interact with subject-matter that itself exhibits some logical continuity, but they must watch their students and listen to them to determine whether a continuity of experience – growth – is occurring.

What Dewey hoped to achieve through education is not a community of adults saturated with information or fixed knowledge but, rather, people who exhibit habits of mind facilitative of further intellectual and moral growth. The word *habit* figures prominently in Dewey's philosophy. In his use of the word, Dewey did not refer to mere repetition or mindless activity. In *Human Nature and Conduct*, he explained that his use was somewhat different from our everyday meaning:

> But we need a word to express that kind of human activity which is influenced by prior activity and in that sense acquired; which contains within itself a certain ordering or systemization of minor elements of action; which is projective, dynamic in quality, ready for overt manifestation; and which is operative in some subdued subordinate form even when not obviously dominating activity ... The essence of habit is an acquired predisposition to *ways* or modes of response, not to particular acts.[34]

We develop habits of mind primarily through inquiry. *Inquiry*, Dewey said, is the controlled transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is whole and determinate.[35] The material used to conduct inquiry Dewey called *knowledge*. Now, again, his use of this word differs somewhat from common usage. For Dewey,

knowledge is bigger than *truth*, and material used in inquiry qualifies as knowledge so long as it continues to guide inquiry successfully. We can describe many situations in which students use faulty rules or routines in their attempts to solve mathematical problems. When these rules bring them to incorrect results, students are led to reflect on their procedures and, eventually, to discard the rules. Faulty rules and information no longer appear in the catalog of knowledge.[36] A word of caution here: Dewey was not consistent in his use of the word *knowledge*. Sometimes he used it in the conventional sense to point to things accepted as known; sometimes his use seems to be synonymous with *truth*. In his discussion of inquiry, however, he separated the data taken initially as knowledge from that arrived at as the conclusion of careful hypothesis testing.

The process of inquiry involves formulating a problem, hypothesizing, testing, analyzing, and evaluating. Its purpose is "finding out things," gaining greater control over our environment, and bringing order to indeterminate situations. Dewey's five-step model has become famous as a description of inquiry. (I leave aside for the moment whether Dewey used it too exclusively in his attempt to describe thinking and learning.) Thinking characteristic of inquiry involves: "(i) a felt difficulty; (ii) its location and definition; (iii) suggestion of possible solution; (iv) development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestion; (v) further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection; that is, the conclusion of belief or disbelief."[37] Dewey pointed out that imagination is involved at several of these steps – in defining the problem, in formulating a hypothesis, and sometimes in testing our conjectures. In his discussion of ethical decision-making, testing in the imagination is especially important.[38] There are possibilities for action that we see immediately to be wrong when we test their consequences in imagination. Indeed, we cannot ethically test them in the actual world. As we will see in the discussion of moral education, this feature of moral thinking may set it apart from scientific thinking, and Dewey may have been mistaken in supposing that all thinking can be reduced to the form he specified for inquiry.

Consider poetic or literary thinking. It is more likely to start from awe, pleasure, comic juxtaposition, grief, or the sort of exemplification that triggers metaphor. Writing about knowledge, Robert Frost contrasted scholars and artists: "Scholars get theirs with

conscientious thoroughness along projected lines of logic; poets theirs cavalierly and as it happens in and out of books. They stick to nothing deliberately, but let what will stick to them like burrs where they walk in the fields."[39] But it is not only poets and fiction writers whose thinking begins with something other than "a felt difficulty." The thinking of naturalists often begins with almost casual observation: there is something wonderful, something colorful, something odd. When a problem arises, naturalists may fall into the pattern described by Dewey, but the pattern may be disrupted often by an unexpected observation.

This is important for teachers. It is one reason that so many of us value *exposure* in education. When we share an experience with students without demanding that it culminate in specific learning, some students may pick up on a feature of our presentation. They may experience the surprise, delight, or wonder mentioned by the poet. They may go on to learn much. From the teacher's perspective, however, the outcome of such episodes should be awareness, not necessarily learning.

Dewey was certainly aware of indirect, informal, or incidental learning. In *Democracy and Education*, he wrote:

> Under normal conditions, learning is a product and reward of occupation with subject matter ... [The child] learns in consequence of his direct activities. The better methods of teaching a child, say, to read, follow the same road. They do not fix his attention upon the fact that he has to learn something ... They engage his activities, and in the process of engagement he learns.[40]

Learning, for Dewey, means the acquisition of useable knowledge, growth in the development of intellectual habits, and more frequent and competent use of the tools of inquiry. One might wish, however, that he had said more about musing, daydreaming, the mental equivalent of walking in fields. Instead of cultivating these activities and steering them toward productive thinking, we do our best to discourage them in schools.

One could also argue that Dewey gave too little attention to the opposite end of the learning spectrum – that of learning routine skills. In the paragraph quoted above on learning to read, Dewey added, "the same is true of the more successful methods of dealing with number or whatever."[41] We might want to modify his claim. Children are unlikely to learn many important skills and principles in

mathematics without some direct instruction and routine practice. But teachers can be careful to explain where this practice is heading, and we can agree with Dewey that teachers should not let it dominate classroom activity.

From the perspective of care theory, there is another concern about overemphasis on the problem-solving mode of inquiry. Working with human relational situations, we may become so immersed in the problem that we forget to look at the human beings who have the problem. Caring requires relation and receptivity. We must listen to the cared-for. When we have decided to respond, we must figure out what to do; problem-solving is clearly involved. However, there must be turning points:

> As we convert what we have received from the other into a problem ... we move away from the other. We clean up his reality, strip it of complex and bothersome qualities, in order to think it. The other's reality becomes data, stuff to be analyzed, studied, interpreted. All this is to be expected and is entirely appropriate, provided that we see the essential turning points and move back to the concrete and the personal. Thus we keep our objective thinking tied to a relational stake at the heart of caring.[42]

Concern for basic relations renews a difficulty noted earlier by Virginia Held. The pragmatist context of experience is perhaps too limited. If it is expanded to include the traditional experience of women, new problems arise and, further, we are encouraged to look for problems, not simply react when we stumble on them. Writing of care ethics, Held notes: "It addresses questions about whether and how we ought to engage in activities of care, questions about how such activities should be conducted and structured, and questions about the meanings of care and caring."[43]

In addition to the analysis of expanded experience, there is a comparable need to extend Dewey's model of problem-solving. Not only should we incorporate the "turning points" mentioned earlier but we also need a more relational perspective on consequences. The original problem may be solved by and for the individual inquirer. But what are the possible effects of his/her solution on others in the social context? Have new problems been introduced? Indeed, whatever the original context of the problem, when moral factors are considered, it may be that "the adequacy of moral understanding decreases as its form approaches generality through abstraction."[44]

Care ethics requires sensitivity to the needs of others both in its search for problems and its examination of consequences. It also includes a basic role for emotion in inquiry and problem-solving. Emotion provides motivation. Reflection on and evaluation of the emotions of all involved in a problem context contribute to the anticipation of further problems and consequences, and attention to these emotions may help to avoid undesirable consequences. Dewey provides some advice here by suggesting that we try out various possibilities and examine the consequences of our prospective acts in our imagination. But he seems to concentrate on the intellectual imagination, whereas care theory emphasizes the empathic imagination.

DEMOCRACY

Dewey's view of democracy is not, strictly speaking, a political view; that is, his view of democracy goes well beyond what most people think of as political. Certainly Dewey would be unwilling to label a nation or society "democratic" simply because it had conducted ostensibly free elections. For Dewey: "A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience."[45]

To get a sense of Dewey's view, we might start with his long-standing debate with Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler[46] over educational matters. Both Hutchins and Adler believed that a democratic form of government depends on the grounding of its citizens in common knowledge, and this common knowledge is fundamentally fixed. Hutchins wrote:

> Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence education should be everywhere the same ... I suggest that the heart of any course of study designed for the whole people will be, if education is rightly understood, the same at any time, in any place, under any political, social, or economic conditions.[47]

One could hardly find a greater contrast to Dewey's position. As we saw earlier, Dewey regarded knowledge as bigger – more encompassing – than truth. Knowledge is that information or understanding which is useful in guiding inquiry, not that bit of eternal truth we have managed to secure. For those knowledge statements that have

resisted vigorous attempts at falsification, Dewey did sometimes use the term *truth*, but he preferred to call such statements *warranted assertions*. He rejected claims to eternal, absolute, or fixed truths.

Dewey's conception of democracy is dynamic, constantly growing, and its health depends on the corresponding growth of its citizens. The first concept treated in *Democracy and Education* is *transmission*:

> Society exists through a process of transmission quite as much as biological life. This transmission occurs by means of communication of habits of doing, thinking, and feeling from the older to the younger. Without this communication of ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, opinions, from those members of society who are passing out of the group life to those who are coming into it, social life could not survive.[48]

Notice that Dewey did not mention the transmission of knowledge, truth, or facts. These are to be sought *in* communication. Dewey began his discussion of communication with the desire to communicate, not with the products of past communication: "There is more than a verbal tie between the words common, community, and communication. Men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common."[49] Next, he did mention knowledge, but it is clear that he wanted to convey a sense of knowledge as dynamic, as ways of knowing:

> What they must have in common in order to form a community or society are aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge – a common understanding – like-mindedness as the sociologists say. Such things cannot be passed physically from one to another, like bricks ... The communication which insures participation in a common understanding is one which secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions – like ways of responding to expectations and requirements.[50]

This paragraph is a powerful introduction to Dewey's philosophy of education and democracy. Desirable intellectual and moral habits are to be transmitted through reciprocal forms of communication and participation. Teachers in democratic societies should not try to pass knowledge – like bricks – to their students; they must engage them in patterns of communication that will help them to develop democratic habits of association as well as the requisite habits of mind.

The difference between Hutchins/Adler and Dewey should be clear. In the Hutchins/Adler view, educated people possess a fund of common, cultural knowledge. In Dewey's view, educated people possess common habits of mind, dispositions, and modes of communication. In Dewey's view, a democracy is always a work in progress; it is not a fixed entity that can be preserved by transmitting fixed values. Democratic societies, in Dewey's framework, develop a history of rational deliberation, a form of communication that addresses problems purposefully and incorporates non-violent ways of handling differences.

The capacity for rational deliberation is not, however, the product of individual, natural intelligence. In *The Public and its Problems*, Dewey made clear that the habits leading to rational deliberation develop through "the give-and-take" of communication, and it is one important function of education to direct this development.[51] Indeed, the *individual* is also a product of social relations. Dewey rejected the notion of pre-social individuals who band together in a social contract. Because he rejected that definition of individuals, he said perhaps too little about rights.[52] It is not true, however, that he rejected the idea of rights; his objection was to the notions of natural rights and of the pre-social individual. Rights are *granted* after rational deliberation among members of a community.

Dewey proposed a two-part criterion for evaluating the worth of various forms of social life. In a democratic form, "there are many interests consciously communicated and shared; and there are varied and free points of contact with other modes of association."[53] Dewey applied this criterion to several groups to show how they fail as worthy forms of social life. Under totalitarian forms, for example, there is a lack of shared communication:

> Stimulation and response are exceedingly one-sided. In order to have a large number of values in common, all the members of the group must have an equable opportunity to receive and to take from others. There must be a large variety of shared undertakings and experiences. Otherwise, the influences which educate some into masters, educate others into slaves.[54]

It is a concern for lack of shared experience – a lack that tends to support classed societies – that led Dewey to object to vocational education as trade education. But this issue needs far more discussion. It is one that is still vital – and still neglected – in current debates

on schooling. No matter what the school does, the society will always need work done that is not associated with academic education. Some of these jobs are unpleasant, boring, or physically demanding. The trades actually offer some of the better jobs in the non-academic category. Dewey could have capitalized on his often repeated claim that any subject can be taught and learned in ways that are intellectually rich and worthwhile. He could also have explored ways to enrich vocational education with topics that treat personal and family life.

He could have suggested that students be allowed, with appropriate guidance, to choose their own course of study. The great moral fault in tracking (or "streaming") is not tracking itself, but the arbitrary assignment of youngsters to "lower" tracks and the provision of poor courses within those tracks.[55] It seems odd for a philosopher so immersed in ideas integrating mind and body and so appreciative of the practical to be unwilling or unable to construct a democratic conception of vocational (trade) education. Given his admiration for Walt Whitman – "the seer of democracy" – one might have expected greater emphasis on respect for all types of honest work.

There is another odd omission in Dewey's discussion of democracy and education. The comprehensive high school made it possible for students from various programs – vocational, academic, business – to come together in extra-curricular activities. These activities provide opportunities for the give-and-take Dewey recommended. In doing so, they increase the "varied and free points of contact with other modes of association." Additionally, school activities such as band concerts, art exhibits, dramatic performances, and sports all provide both school–community contacts and educational experiences beyond the classroom. Dewey himself, in *Freedom and Culture*, recognized the importance of the arts to democracy:

> It has not been customary to include the arts, the fine arts, as an important part of the social conditions that bear upon democratic institutions and personal freedom. Even after the influence of the state of industry and of natural science has been admitted, we still tend to draw the line at the idea that literature, music, painting, the drama, architecture, have any intimate connection with the cultural bases of democracy.[56]

Yet there is little mention in Dewey's educational philosophy of clubs, arts, or other extra-curricular activities. But this neglect of

the arts in political/social life was not as widespread as Dewey suggested. At the same point in time, Virginia Woolf gave the issue careful attention in *Three Guineas*.[57]

MORAL EDUCATION

Dewey consistently drew our attention to two meanings of moral education. In the first, *moral education* refers to a form of education that is morally justified. In the second – one much in the public eye today – it refers to an education (or curriculum) designed to produce moral people. Most of Dewey's writings on education concentrate on the first meaning but, of course, the two are not unrelated.

In handling these two aspects of moral education, Dewey walked a line between liberalism and communitarianism. It is not surprising that he is referred to by some as a "pragmatic liberal" and by others as a "democratic communitarian." He believed that a democratic community could do much to shape social individuals who would embrace common goals, associate cooperatively, and work together for the common good. In "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," he said: "It is not the mere individual who makes the final demand for moral action, who establishes the final end, or furnishes the final standards of worth. It is the constitution and development of the larger life into which he enters which settles these things."[58]

If he had left his thinking there, he would have been subject to a charge often leveled at communitarians – that they are too tightly bound to the values and customs of their particular community. Is the collective always right? How can we criticize the "larger life" of which we are a part if that group "settles these things"?

But Dewey did not leave the matter there; he did not embrace an Aristotelian communitarianism. He put great emphasis on the capacity of individuals to engage in critical thinking. Clearly, he expected the methods of intelligence to work toward the improvement of society. Critical thinkers will improve society, and a democratic society will support and nurture critical thinkers.[59] However, many of Dewey's critics believe there is still a problem here. Upon what do critical thinkers draw if they cannot rely entirely on the principles, values, and customs of their society? Is method sufficient to accomplish what Dewey set out to do? The problem identified by critics may be only theoretical. In a closed society – one with a fixed

and universally accepted ethos – the problem would surely be real. But in today's pluralistic societies with multiple means of widespread and instantaneous communication, many competing ideas and values may trigger critical thinking and supply alternative criteria for evaluation.

As a society becomes more democratic, it educates to guide the critical thinking that will support its own survival and growth. The school plays a significant role in this task: "[It exercises] a certain specific function in maintaining the life and advancing the welfare of society ... [And] the educational system which does not recognize this fact as entailing upon it an ethical responsibility is derelict and a defaulter."[60]

The school should, then, be organized as a miniature society, one that incorporates the best features of the developing, democratic, larger society: "The school cannot be a preparation for social life excepting as it reproduces, within itself, the typical conditions of social life."[61] But what are these conditions? How should educators choose the elements of the larger society that best reflect its democratic ideals? This is not a trivial problem, and the pluralism that furnishes competing ideas to stimulate critical thinking now contributes to continual debate within the philosophy of education. Should educators use the view of democracy advanced by Hutchins and Adler or the one put forth by Dewey? On what grounds?

The possible flaw in Dewey's thinking is perhaps best illustrated through a careful examination of his own words:

> I sum up ... by asking your attention to the moral trinity of the school. The demand is for social intelligence, social power, and social interests. Our resources are (1) the life of the school as a social institution in itself; (2) methods of learning and of doing work; and (3) the school studies or curriculum. In so far as the school represents, in its own spirit, a genuine community life; in so far as what are called school discipline, government, order, etc., are the expressions of this inherent social spirit; in so far as the methods used are those which appeal to the active and constructive powers, permitting the child to give out, and thus to serve; in so far as the curriculum is so selected and organized as to provide the material for affording the child a consciousness of the world in which he has to play a part, and the relations he has to meet; in so far as these ends are met, the school is organized on an ethical basis.[62]

Now, arguably, the conditions laid out by Dewey could be met by many kinds of society. Fascist philosophers of education could agree

with most, perhaps all, of Dewey's points.[63] Thus everything depends on how Dewey construes and defends each of the three resources mentioned above. This "moral trinity" cannot stand on its own. We have to dig through the vast body of Dewey's work to find justification for his pronouncements on moral education and, even then, we may feel that something vital is missing.[64]

Uneasy over the missing (vital and basic) elements in Dewey's ideas on moral education, we may nevertheless agree with his criticism of what is today called "character education":

> What the normal child continuously needs is not so much isolated moral lessons instilling in him the importance of truthfulness and honesty, or the beneficial results that follow from some particular act of patriotism, etc. It is the formation of habits of social imagination and conception.[65]

Care theory tends to agree with this, but it suggests a more explicit, a firmer, foundation on which to build the formation of such habits. It insists upon receptivity, vulnerability to the suffering of others, acceptance of the obligation to respond as carer to the expressed needs of the cared-for (which may involve meeting those needs, diverting them, or sensitively rejecting them), and at least one absolute injunction: never inflict unnecessary pain.

It is not that Dewey entirely neglected issues of sensitivity and emotional qualities. Good character, he wrote: "[requires] a delicate responsiveness – there must be emotional reaction ... [It] is difficult to put this quality into words ... [This sensitivity is characterized] by tact, by instinctive recognition of the claims of others, by skill in adjusting.[66]

Even here, we may rightly be bothered by Dewey's seeming lack of commitment and his provision of a way to escape the obligation to care through "skill in adjusting." Again and again, we have to look well beyond his specific words on moral theory and moral education to locate the elements needed to fill them out. Perhaps the difficulty lies in his refusal to see morality as a distinctive domain of human life – one irreducible to the domain of scientific method.

With a firmer foundation, or what Dewey himself referred to as a "pou sto," which sympathy provides, his method of moral decision-making can be powerful. In *Ethics*, he described it as "democratic rehearsal":

Deliberation is actually an imaginative rehearsal of various courses of conduct. We give way, *in our mind*, to some impulse; we try, *in our mind*, some plan. Following its career through various steps, we find ourselves in imagination in the presence of the consequences that would follow; and as we then like and approve, or dislike and disapprove, these consequences, we find the original impulse or plan good or bad.[67]

Notice that Dewey has here once again made use of imagination. The method described is indeed powerful, provided we have adequate criteria by which to judge when we *should* approve or disapprove certain consequences. Care theory lays out such criteria; Dewey did not.

CONCLUSION

Care theory is largely compatible with Dewey's philosophy of education. Both agree on the active nature of the child, the interactive nature of curriculum, the centrality of inquiry and critical thinking, and the need for continuous development of democratic ideas. However, care theorists include far more on the experience of women;[68] accordingly, they say more about an expanded curriculum, and they find a worrisome gap in Dewey's discussion of moral education. These flaws can be remedied. Dewey himself recognized that philosophy would change as women began to engage in it.

NOTES

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3. J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (1916), *MW* 9:122.
4. Dewey, *School and Society*, p. 30.
5. Dewey, *School and Society*, pp. 37–38.
6. Dewey, *School and Society*, p. 38.
7. S. Thornton, "Social Studies Misunderstood: A Reply to Kieran Egan," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 12 (1984), 42–47.
8. See K. Egan, *Children's Minds, Talking Rabbits, and Clockwork Oranges* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999).
9. J. Dewey, *How We Think* (1909), *MW* 6:311.
10. Dewey, *How We Think*, p. 311.
11. M. Gardner, *The Whys of a Philosophical Scrivener* (New York: Quill, 1983), p. 335.

12. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 55.
13. J. Dewey, *Experience and Education* (1938), *LW* 13:19.
14. S. Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), p. 83.
15. Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking*, pp. 85–86.
16. See N. Noddings, *The Challenge to Care in Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992), and N. Noddings, *Happiness and Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
17. See A. M. Sidorkin, *Learning Relations* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002).
18. See P. Jackson, "John Dewey's *School and Society* Revisited," *Elementary School Journal* 98 (1998), 415–426; also D. C. Phillips, "John Dewey's *Child and the Curriculum*: A Century Later," *Elementary School Journal* 98 (1998), 403–414.
19. J. Dewey, *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), *MW* 2:279.
20. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 7.
21. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 7.
22. Dewey, *School and Society*, p. 13.
23. J. Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).
24. See, for example, N. Noddings, *Critical Lessons: What our Schools Should Teach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
25. Dewey, *How We Think*, pp. 211–212.
26. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 318.
27. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 326.
28. See, for example, Held, *Feminist Morality*; V. Held, *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Noddings, *Happiness and Education*; Noddings, *Critical Lessons*; Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking*; and Joan Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
29. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 19.
30. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 11.
31. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 11.
32. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, pp. 11–12.
33. Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 24.
34. J. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922), *MW* 14:32.
35. For more on this concept, see J. Garrison, *Dewey and Eros* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997), and J. S. Johnston, *Inquiry and Education: John Dewey and the Quest for Democracy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).
36. For further discussion of this process, see N. Noddings, *Philosophy of Education*, 2nd edn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007).
37. Dewey, *How We Think*, pp. 236–237.

38. J. Dewey, *Ethics* (1908), *MW* 5.
39. R. Frost, *Complete Poems* (New York: Henry Holt, 1949), p. viii.
40. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 176.
41. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 176.
42. N. Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, 2nd edn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 36.
43. Held, *Ethics of Care*, p. 46.
44. M. U. Walker, "Moral Understandings: Alternative 'Epistemology' for a Feminist Ethics," *Hypatia* 4 (1989), 15–28.
45. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 93.
46. See R. M. Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1936); M. Adler, *The Paideia Proposal* (New York: Macmillan, 1982).
47. Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America*, p. 66.
48. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 6.
49. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 7.
50. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 7.
51. J. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (1927), *LW* 2.
52. See E. Callan, *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
53. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 89.
54. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 90.
55. See N. Noddings, *When School Reform Goes Wrong* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007).
56. J. Dewey, *Freedom and Culture* (1939), *LW* 13:69.
57. V. Woolf, *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1938).
58. J. Dewey, "Ethical Principles Underlying Education" (1897), *EW* 5:58.
59. See S. M. Fishman and L. McCarthy, *John Dewey and the Challenge of Classroom Practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998).
60. Dewey, "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," p. 58.
61. Dewey, "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," pp. 61–62.
62. Dewey, "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," pp. 75–76.
63. See G. Gentile, *Genesis and Structure of Society*, trans. H. S. Harris (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960).
64. See N. Noddings, "Thoughts on Dewey's 'Ethical Principles Underlying Education,'" *Elementary School Journal*, 98 (1998), 479–488.
65. Dewey, "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," p. 72.
66. Dewey, "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," p. 80.
67. Dewey, *Ethics* (1908), p. 293; emphasis in the original.
68. See C. Seigfried, ed., *Feminist Interpretations of John Dewey* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

13 Dewey's vision of radical democracy

We tend to forget that the word "democracy" has had a negative connotation through most of its long history. The Greek word *demokratia* means rule by the demos, the populace, the common people. For centuries, there has been a fear that the unchecked rule by the people would be anarchic and turn into tyranny. The Founding Fathers of the United States did not think of themselves as creating a democracy, but rather a new *republic*. The elaborate system of checks and balances, as well as the Bill of Rights, were intended to counter the abuses of unrestrained democracy. Only in the nineteenth century did the word "democracy" begin to take on a positive connotation, although Alexis de Tocqueville – the most perceptive commentator on American democracy – warned about the many dangers that it confronted. And John Stuart Mill, the great liberal thinker, was worried about the tendency of democratic societies to foster mediocrity. There has always been an undercurrent, even by champions of democracy, that it is neither viable nor desirable to think that a workable democracy can involve the active participation of *all* the people.

Today, the word "democracy" has such a positive aura, and elicits such a powerful emotional response, that we rarely *think* about what we really mean by democracy. A cynic might even claim that "democracy" is one of those words that can (and has) taken on virtually any meaning – ranging from a commitment to free elections and majority rule to an identification with "free market" capitalism. John Dewey reminds us that even the Soviet Union at the height of Stalinist totalitarianism accused "the traditionally democratic peoples of the West in Europe and America of betraying the cause of democracy and [held] itself up as representing in its politics and

principles the fulfillment of the democratic idea now misrepresented and betrayed by peoples who profess democracy but fail to carry it out in practice."[1]

It is against this background that I want to examine the meaning of democracy in the works of John Dewey. My aim is to retrieve the core of what he means by democracy and to evaluate his contribution from our present perspective. Specifically, I am concerned with what we may still learn from Dewey in our own attempts to understand and foster democratic practices. Among modern philosophers (and even ancient philosophers) Dewey stands out as the thinker for whom democracy is the central theme in virtually all his works. From his earliest writings in the 1880s until his death in 1952, Dewey returned over and over again to the meaning of democracy. The theme of democracy is manifest in his writings on education, science, inquiry, aesthetics, art, metaphysics, nature, and religion.

THE ETHICS OF DEMOCRACY

I want to begin with an examination of Dewey's first explicit essay on democracy, "The Ethics of Democracy" – an essay that he wrote when he was twenty-nine and a young professor at the University of Michigan. This review of Sir Henry Maine's critique of democracy in his *Popular Government* provides Dewey with an opportunity to sketch "the ideal of democracy." Despite its arcane language, heavily influenced by the Hegelianism that Dewey learned from his mentor, George Morris, we can already detect several themes that Dewey elaborated, refined, and revised during the rest of his career.

We get a vivid sense of Maine's disdain for democracy from some of the sentences that Dewey quotes. "[Democracy's] legislation is a wild burst of destructive wantonness; an arbitrary overthrow of all existing institutions, followed by a longer period in which its principles put an end to all social and political activity." "There can be no delusion greater than that democracy is a progressive form of government." "The establishment of the masses in power is the blackest omen for all legislation founded on scientific opinion."[2]

Dewey tells us that Maine's conception of democracy consists of three main points: (1) "democracy is only a form of government"; (2) "government is simply that which has to do with the relation of

subject to sovereign, of political superior to inferior"; (3) democracy is that form of government in which the sovereign is the multitude of individuals. Dewey strongly objects to *all* three points and declares that Maine's conception of democracy amounts to little more than the idea of government by "numerical aggregation." The "natural and inevitable" outcome of this notion of democracy is the theory of "Social Contract." Dewey bluntly states: "The essence of the 'Social Contract' theory is not the idea of the formulation of a contract; it is the idea that men are mere individuals, without any social relations *until* they form a contract."[3] Dewey categorically rejects this notion of the pre-social individual: "The fact is, however, that the theory of the 'social organism,' that theory that men are not isolated non-social atoms, but are men only when in intrinsic relations to men, has wholly superseded the theory of men as an aggregate, as a heap of grains of sand needing some factitious mortar to put them into a semblance of order."[4] If we think of human beings as "non-social units," as "mere multitude" then "the picture drawn of democracy is, in effect, simply an account of anarchy. To define democracy simply as the rule of the many, as sovereignty chopped up into mince meat, is to define it as the abrogation of society, as society dissolved, annihilated."[5] The essential sociality of human beings has both a descriptive and *normative* significance. Dewey consistently argued that any theory of human beings that fails to acknowledge that human beings "are not isolated non-social atoms" is defective, a misleading abstraction of philosophers. When the normative significance of the distinctive sociality of human beings is fully developed, it leads to the idea of democracy as an ethical form of life. In *The Public and its Problems* (1927), Dewey tells us: "regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself. It is the ideal in the only intelligible sense of an ideal: namely, the tendency and movement of some thing which exists carried to its final limit, viewed as completed, perfected."[6]

Dewey is quite emphatic that democracy is not simply a "form of government" where the majority rules. "But the heart of the matter is found not in the voting nor in counting the votes to see where the majority is formed. It is in the process by which the majority is formed."[7] Dewey emphasizes two closely related points that characterize his approach to democracy. The first concerns the meaning of

democratic sovereignty. Democratic sovereignty does not consist of the numerical aggregate of individuals. If we adopt the conception of society where the individual and society are reciprocally internally related, then we can understand how "the individual embodies and realizes within himself the spirit and will of the whole organism."[8] In a democracy *every* individual is a sovereign citizen. Dewey, at this early stage of his career, was influenced not only by the Hegelian idea of the social organism but also by his Congregational Christian background. "And this is the theory, often crudely expressed, but none the less true in substance, that every citizen is a sovereign, the American theory, a doctrine which in grandeur has but one equal in history, and that its fellow, namely, that every man is a priest of God."[9] Consequently, it is a serious mistake to suggest, as Maine does, that democracy, like all forms of government, consists of two classes, "one of governors, one of governed." "Government does not mean one class or side of society set over against the other. The government is not made up of those who hold office, or sit in the legislature. It consists of every member of political society."[10] This is the true meaning of the democratic idea that government derives its powers from the consent of the people.

The second point that Dewey emphasizes for a correct understanding of democracy is that democracy is primarily an *ethical way of life*.

> To say that democracy is *only* a form of government is like saying that a home is a more or less geometrical arrangement of bricks and mortar; that a church is a building with pews, pulpit and spire. It is true; they certainly are so much. But it is false; they are infinitely more. Democracy, like any other polity, has been finely termed the memory of an historic past, the consciousness of a living present, the ideal of a coming future. Democracy, in a word is social, that is to say, an ethical conception, and upon its ethical significance is based its significance as governmental. Democracy is a form of government only because it is a form of moral and spiritual association.[11]

When Dewey speaks of democracy as ethical, he is drawing upon the rich Hegelian understanding of *Sittlichkeit* and the Greek understanding of *ethos* as the customs, norms, attitudes, sentiments, and aspirations that characterize the life of a people. Throughout his life Dewey argued that without a vital democratic *ethos* or culture, political democracy becomes hollow and meaningless. Democracy as a form of government is an outgrowth of, and is dependent upon, this

living *ethos*. "A government springs from a vast mass of sentiments, many vague, some defined, of instincts, of aspirations, of ideas, of hopes and fears, of purposes. It is their reflex and incorporation; their projection and outgrowth."[12]

But what is distinctive about the democratic *ethos*? What distinguishes the democratic *ethos* from the aristocratic *ethos*? To highlight the difference, Dewey gives a brief sketch of Plato's *Republic*, "the most perfect picture of the aristocratic ideal which history affords. The few best, the aristoi; these know and are fitted to rule, but they are to rule not in their own interests but in that of society as a whole, and therefore, in that of every individual in society. They do not bear rule *over* others; they show them what they can best do, and guide them in doing it."[13] Consequently, Plato's ideal republic is also a form of moral and spiritual association in which the "development of man's nature ... brings him into complete harmony with the universe of spiritual relations, or in Platonic language, the state [*polis*]." But "according to Plato (and the aristocratic idea everywhere), the multitude is incapable of forming such an ideal and attempting to reach it."[14]

Democracy is distinguished from all forms of aristocracy because it is based on the conviction that *every* human being is capable of personal responsibility and individual initiative. "There is individualism in democracy which there is not in aristocracy; but it is an ethical, not a numerical individualism; it is an individualism of freedom, of responsibility, of initiative to and for the ethical ideal, not an individualism of lawlessness."[15] Dewey calls this ethical individualism *personality* – personality is not something ontologically given but rather an *achievement*. In a democratic society every sovereign citizen is capable of achieving personality.

The point that Dewey stresses in this early article goes beyond a critique of the classic aristocratic ideal. Throughout his career, Dewey was critical of what came to be called "democratic elitism" or "democratic realism." Democratic realists adopt a version of the aristocratic argument. They claim that in the contemporary world, where individuals can be so effectively manipulated by mass media, and the problems of society have become so complex, a viable democracy requires the "wisdom" of an intelligentsia, who like Plato's *aristoi*, "rule not in their own interests but in that of society as a whole." But Dewey was always deeply suspicious of those who

advocated that a viable democracy requires a special class of intelligentsia who have the responsibility to make "wise" democratic decisions. This became the central issue in Dewey's famous dispute with Walter Lippmann, an issue that Dewey confronted in *The Public and its Problems*.

DEMOCRATIC FAITH

Dewey certainly recognizes that there is a positive role for expert knowledge in a democratic society. He always emphasized the importance of social inquiry for advancing social reform. But, ultimately, democratic citizens must judge and decide, not the experts. This stands at the core of Dewey's democratic faith. Robert B. Westbrook eloquently summarizes this democratic faith when he speaks of Dewey's "belief that democracy as an ethical ideal calls upon men and women to build communities in which the necessary opportunities and resources are available for every individual to realize fully his or her particular capacities and powers through participation in political, social, and cultural life."[16] Dewey never wavered in his democratic faith. Fifty years after he published "The ethics of democracy," on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, Dewey reiterated that the democratic ideal rests on a "faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgment and action if the proper conditions are furnished."[17] We can clearly see the continuity between Dewey's earliest formulation of the meaning of democracy and what he affirms in "Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us."

> Democracy is a way of life controlled by a working faith in the possibilities of human nature. Belief in the Common Man is a familiar article in the democratic creed. The belief is without basis and significance save as it means faith in the possibilities of human nature is exhibited in every human being irrespective of race, color, sex, birth and family, of material or cultural wealth. This faith may be enacted in statutes, but it is only on paper unless it is put in force in the attitudes which human beings display to one another in all the incidents and relations of daily life.[18]

Dewey does not hesitate to speak about his democratic *faith*, but this faith is not a blind faith or a vapid optimism. It is a reflective or intelligent faith that is based on his understanding of human beings and their potentialities. When challenged by his critics, Dewey did not hesitate to defend this democratic faith.

I have been accused more than once and from opposed quarters of an undue, a utopian faith in the possibilities of intelligence and in education as a correlate of intelligence. At all events, I did not invent this faith. I acquired it from my surroundings as far as those surroundings were animated by the democratic spirit. For what is the faith in democracy in the role of consultation, of conference, of persuasion, of discussion, in the formation of public opinion, which in the long run is self-corrective, except faith in the capacity of the intelligence of the common man to respond with commonsense to the free play of facts and ideas which are secured by effective guarantees of free inquiry, free assembly and free communication?[19]

I have discussed "The Ethics of Democracy" in some detail because, despite the abstractness of Dewey's argument and the vagueness of such key concepts as "social organism" and "personality," many of the major themes in his understanding of democracy are already sketched. Furthermore, it sets an agenda for the problems that Dewey was yet to confront – problems concerning the relation of "really existing democracy" to the ethical ideal of democracy, the role of conflict within democratic societies, and the means by which we can approximate the democratic ideal. "The Ethics of Democracy," with its reliance on the organic metaphors and spiritual references to Christianity, was written when Dewey was still very much isolated from the dynamic changes that were taking place in America's urban culture. When Dewey moved to Chicago in 1894 he was fully exposed to the human consequences of rapid industrialization, labor strife, and the practical problems that arose from the influx of immigrant populations. To appreciate how Dewey developed his ideas about democracy we need to grasp the practical problem that became his primary concern. Dewey sharply criticized the abuses of a laissez-faire mentality, the fetish of individualism, and the "pseudo-liberalism" that had become so dominant during the last decades of the nineteenth century in America. He believed that the greatest dangers to democracy were *internal* ones where the democratic *ethos* and democratic practices are undermined. He was scornful of "moralism" – the belief that genuine social reform could be achieved simply by calling for individual moral reform. He felt that liberalism, which had once served radical ends, was being used to justify the status quo and to block social reform. The turn toward *praxis* that shaped the young Hegelians and

the early Marx also shaped Dewey's outlook. But Dewey was never tempted by the idea of a violent revolution. He advocated social reform by democratic means.

DEMOCRACY IS RADICAL

In a late essay, "Democracy Is Radical," Dewey reiterated what he had consistently advocated: "*The fundamental principle of democracy is that ends of freedom and individuality for all can be attained only by the means that accord with those ends*."

Dewey also affirmed:

> *The end of democracy is a radical end. For it is an end that has not been adequately realized in any country at any time*. It is radical because it requires great change in existing social institutions, economic, legal and cultural. A democratic liberalism that does not recognize these things in thought and action is not awake to its own meaning and to what that meaning demands.[20]

This ideal of radical democracy is not an impossible "utopian" ideal – or even a regulative principle in the Kantian sense that can never, in principle, be realized. Rather it is an end-in-view that can guide our actions *here and now*. It is an ideal that serves as a critical standard for evaluating the deficiencies of "really existing" democracies and serves also as a guide for concrete action. Alan Ryan beautifully captures the spirit of Dewey when he concludes his study of Dewey by telling us that:

> Dewey was a visionary. That was his appeal. He was a curious visionary, because he did not speak of a distant goal or a city not built with hands. He was a visionary about the here and now, about the potentiality of the modern world, modern society, modern man, and thus, as it happened, America and the Americans of the twentieth century.[21]

One of the clearest and most forceful statements of Dewey's belief that democratic means are integral to democratic ends is found in his response to Leon Trotsky. In 1937, at the age of seventy-eight, Dewey agreed to serve as chairman of the Commission of Inquiry that was formed to hear and evaluate the charges made against Trotsky and his son by Stalin. At the time Trotsky was living in exile in Mexico at the home of Diego Rivera. When Dewey agreed to chair the Commission, Communists and Popular Front sympathizers vilified him. Threats

were made against his life. Friends and family urged him not to go to Mexico. Nevertheless, Dewey made the arduous trip to Mexico City where the inquiry was held. His sense of justice and decency demanded that he participate in the investigation of the charges brought against Trotsky. Dewey's willingness to set aside his intellectual work – he was working on *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* when he was asked to chair the Commission – was consistent with the way in which he always lived his life. "But I have given my life to the work of education, which I have conceived to be that of public enlightenment in the interests of society. If I finally accepted the responsible post I now occupy, it was because I realized that to act otherwise would be false to my life work."[22] The Commission provided an opportunity to expose the horrors of Stalinist terror and the scandal of the Moscow purges.

When Dewey first visited the Soviet Union in 1928, he was enthusiastic about the prospects for freedom and education, but subsequently he expressed his bitter disappointment. Reflecting on what he learned from the inquiry and his encounter with Trotsky, he wrote:

> The great lesson for all American radicals and for all sympathizers with the USSR is that they must go back and reconsider the whole question of the means of bringing about social changes and of truly democratic methods of approach to social progress ... The dictatorship of the proletariat had led to and, I am convinced, always must lead to a dictatorship over the proletariat and the party. I see no reason to believe that something similar would not happen in every country in which an attempt is made to establish a Communist government.[23]

After the Commission exonerated Trotsky, he published an article, "Their Morals and Ours," in the *New International* where Trotsky set forth his commitment to "the liberating morality of the proletariat" which "deduces a rule of conduct from the law as of the development of society, thus primarily from the class struggle, the law of all laws." Dewey was invited to respond, and he did so vigorously.[24] He sharply criticized Trotsky for claiming that "the end justifies the means," and for abandoning the principle of the interdependence of means and ends. He strongly objected to the idea that democratic ends can be achieved by non-democratic means. It is fraudulent and ultimately incoherent to claim that democratic ends

can be achieved by violent non-democratic means. "Democratic ends" are never fixed or static; they are dynamic and integral to democratic processes and means. Democratic means are *constitutive* of democratic ends-in-view. Furthermore, there are always unintended consequences of our actions; consequently a democratic *ethos* demands flexibility and the acknowledgement of our fallibility about both means and ends. Dewey claims that Trotsky, who attempts to avoid one kind of absolutism, actually plunges us "into another kind of absolutism."[25]

THE FAILURES OF DEMOCRACY

Dewey was realistic about the failures and limitations of democracy in America. The history of the United States is not only a history of democratic aspirations and achievements but a history of brutality, violence, and bigotry. His concluding remarks in "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy" (1917) have an uncanny contemporary resonance:

> We pride ourselves upon being realistic, desiring a hard-hearted cognizance of facts, and devoted to mastering the means of life. We pride ourselves upon a practical idealism, a lively and easily moved faith in the possibilities as yet unrealized, in willingness to make sacrifice in their realization. Idealism easily becomes a sanction of waste and carelessness, and realism a sanction of legal formalism in behalf of things that are – the rights of the possessor. We thus tend to combine a loose and ineffective optimism with assent to the doctrine of take who take can: a deification of power. All peoples at all times have been narrowly realistic in practice and have employed idealization to cover in sentiment and theory their brutalities. But never, perhaps, has the tendency been so dangerous and so tempting as with ourselves. Faith in the power of intelligence to imagine a future which is the projection of the desirable in the present, and to invent the instrumentalities of its realization, is our salvation. And it is a faith which must be nurtured and made articulate: surely a sufficiently large task for our philosophy.[26]

Dewey was also alarmed by the growth of corporate mentality in America. What he wrote in 1930 seems even more threatening today.

> The business mind, having its own conversation and language, its own interests, its own intimate groupings in which men of this mind, in their collective capacity, determine the tone of society at large as well as the government of industrial society, and have more political influence than

the government itself ... We now have, although without formal or legal status, a mental and moral corporateness for which history affords no parallel.[27]

When Walter Lippmann in the 1920s criticized the very idea of an informed citizen and described the way in which mass media can distort public opinion, Dewey agreed with his *diagnosis*. Dewey himself spoke of the "eclipse of the public." "[The] Public seems to be lost; it is certainly bewildered." But, unlike Lippmann, who argued that the best hope for American democracy was the leadership that "disinterested experts" might provide, Dewey claimed that the cure for the ills of democracy was a more radical and committed democracy.

The old saying that the cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy is not apt if it means that the evils may be remedied by introducing more machinery of the same kind as that which already exists, or by refining and perfecting that machinery. But the phrase may also indicate the need of returning to the idea itself, of clarifying and deepening our apprehension of it, and of employing our sense of its meaning to criticize and remake its political manifestations.[28]

If democracy is to be made a living reality then our task now is "to re-create by deliberate and determined endeavor the kind of democracy which in its origin ... was largely the product of a fortunate combination of men and circumstances."[29] We can no longer act as if democracy takes place in Washington or when individuals go to the polls to vote. Democracy is a personal way of individual life and it only becomes a concrete reality when it is practiced in our everyday lives.

Thomas Jefferson was one of Dewey's heroes because his understanding of democracy is moral through and through: in its foundations, its methods, and its ends. Jefferson thought the transformation of America from an agricultural society to an industrial one would pose a serious threat to democracy. But Dewey claimed that industrialization is not the problem, but rather the "dislocation and unsettlement of local communities." Dewey admired Jefferson because he so clearly recognized the need for active citizen participation in local communities to keep the democratic promise alive. Jefferson called these little republics "wards." Jefferson "was impressed, practically as well as theoretically, with the effectiveness of the New England

town meeting, and wished to see something of the sort made an organic part of the governing process of the whole country."[30] Consequently we must find new ways to revitalize local communities and foster the development of *multiple* publics where citizens can engage in debate and deliberation together.

BEYOND COMMUNITARIANISM AND LIBERALISM

One of the current debates in democratic political theory is the debate between communitarians and liberals. Communitarians typically defend the centrality of vital communities in which we find our political identity. Michael J. Sandel, who was one of the first to advance a communitarian critique of the liberalism developed by John Rawls, distinguishes between instrumental, sentimental, and a strong constitutive sense of community.

> On this strong view to say that the members of a society are bound by a sense of community is not to say that a great many of them profess communitarian sentiments and pursue communitarian aims, but rather that they conceive their identity – the subject and not just the object of their feelings and aspirations – as defined to some extent by the community of which they are a part.[31]

Liberals are wary of this strong sense of community because they fear that it all too easily leads to an infringement of individual rights and liberties. Where does Dewey stand in this opposition between communitarians and liberals? There are passages in Dewey's writings that appear to place him in both camps – especially if they are quoted out of context. But Dewey would have viewed this as a *false* opposition. Like communitarians, Dewey does stress that democracy requires public spaces and communities where citizens can participate as equals and engage in collective deliberation. In *The Public and its Problems*, he declared: "Unless local communal life can be restored, the public cannot adequately solve its most urgent problem: to find and identify itself."[32] But Dewey never thought that democratic communal life was incompatible with liberalism. Liberalism is not a fixed or static doctrine. It is a dynamic changing tradition that has served different purposes at different times in its development. In the eighteenth century, liberalism placed primary emphasis on individual liberty and religious confessional freedom. This liberalism was

effective in sweeping away innumerable abuses. In the nineteenth century, liberal ideas were extended to economic interests. Liberal ideas include a "strenuous demand for liberty of mind – the freedom of thought and its expression in speech, writing, print and assemblage. The earlier interest in confessional freedom was generalized, and thereby deepened and broadened."[33] But something else also happened. Liberalism ossified: it degenerated into "pseudo-liberalism." It turned into a rationalization for unbridled laissez-faire entrepreneurship. Furthermore this "pseudo-liberalism" conceived of "the individual as something given, complete in itself, and of liberty as a ready-made possession of the individual [which] only needed the removal of external restrictions in order to manifest itself."[34] In 1935, in the middle of the Depression, Dewey called for a new liberalism that would be truly radical.

> Liberalism must now become radical, meaning by "radical" perception of the necessity of thorough-going changes in the set up of institutions and corresponding activity to bring the changes to pass. For the gulf between what the actual situation makes possible and the actual state of affairs is so great that it cannot be bridged by piecemeal policies undertaken *ad hoc*. The process of producing the changes will be, in any case, a gradual one. But "reforms" that deal now with this abuse and now with that without having a social goal based on an inclusive plan, differ entirely from effort at re-forming, in its literal sense, the institutional scheme of things. The liberals of more than a century ago were denounced in their time as subversive radicals, and only when the new economic order was established did they become apologists for the status quo, or else content with social patchwork. If radicalism is defined as perception of the need for radical change, then today any liberalism which is not also radicalism is irrelevant and doomed.[35]

This passage expresses Dewey's hopes for a radical turn in the liberal tradition, a radical turn that is not only compatible with, but requires a vital local community life. But for all its stirring rhetoric, and despite Dewey's persistent demands to deal with concrete problems and to specify the means for achieving ends-in-view, Dewey never specified those "thorough-going changes in the set up of institutions" nor did he specify "the corresponding activity to bring the changes to pass." I will return to this weakness in Dewey's conception of radical liberalism at the end of this chapter, but I want to emphasize that Dewey's vision of democracy incorporates both communitarian and liberal insights. He rejects the claim that these two emphases are

incompatible with each other. On the contrary, they are mutually interdependent. The democratic communities that Dewey envisioned encourage individual initiative, personal responsibility, protection of rights, and active citizen participation.

THE ROLE OF CONFLICT IN DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

I suggested earlier that "The Ethics of Democracy" not only introduces some of the central themes of Dewey's vision of democracy, but also exposes serious problems that he was yet to confront. One of the most serious is the role of conflict within a democratic polity. The excessive reliance on the concept of "social organism" obscures this problem because it emphasizes the harmony of the individual and the social organism. Dewey tells us: "In conception, at least, democracy approaches the ideal of social organization; that in which individual and society are organic to each other." "The whole lives truly in every member ... The organism manifests itself as what truly is, an ideal or spiritual life, a unity of *will*."[36] Not only is this notion of the social organism problematic, it has consequences that are antidemocratic. It fails to do justice to a feature of democracy that Dewey came to realize is at the heart of vibrant democracies – conflict and struggle.

When Dewey moved to Chicago, he arrived during the bitter conflict of the famous Pullman strike. Dewey followed the strike closely and his sympathies were clearly with the striking workers. Dewey came to appreciate the important functional role of conflicts that take place within a democratic society. Robert B. Westbrook notes that Dewey believed "the elimination of conflict to be 'a hopeless and self-contradictory ideal' for social life, like individual life, entailed an ongoing reconstruction of conflict-ridden, 'disintegrating coordinations.' This view of conflict as an inevitable and potentially functional aspect of social life distinguished Dewey from reformers, including his friend Jane Addams, who regarded it as unnecessary and thoroughly dysfunctional."[37] But Dewey also dissociated himself from those who advocated versions of social Darwinism, which falsely claimed that the ruthless "struggle for existence" is the governing principle of all human life. Conflict is not just "ineliminable" in democratic politics; it is *essential* for the achievement of social reform and justice. No longer does Dewey speak of democracy as an

ideal organic unity of the individual and society. New conflicts will always break out. The key point is how one *responds* to conflict. And this requires imagination, intelligence, and a commitment to solve concrete problems. Dewey might well have endorsed the following eloquent description of democratic politics.

> Democratic politics is an encounter among people with differing interests, perspectives, and opinions – an encounter in which they reconsider and mutually revise opinions and interests, both individual and common. It happens always in a context of conflict, imperfect knowledge, and uncertainty, but where community action is necessary. The resolutions achieved are always more or less temporary, subject to reconsideration, and rarely unanimous. What matters is not unanimity but discourse. The substantive common interest is only discovered or created in democratic political struggle, and it remains contested as much as shared. Far from being inimical to democracy, conflict – handled in democratic ways, with openness and persuasion – is what makes democracy work, what makes for mutual revision of opinions and interests.[38]

Once again we can see how Dewey develops a *via media* between extremes. Many political theorists stress the agonistic aspect of democratic politics – the way in which democracy requires and thrives on conflict. And there are those who emphasize the deliberative features of democracy – the need for discourse, deliberation, and persuasion. But both are required for a healthy democratic polity. Champions of agonistic politics are suspicious of talk of "community," "harmony," "consensus," "deliberation," and the "common good." They think that these "soothing" expressions harbor oppressive power and suppress the voices of those who are disenfranchised. "Consensus" means the death of democratic politics. But too frequently these defenders of "agonistic" politics do not face up to the dangers of agonism when it is carried to its extreme. Agonism – as Hegel reminds us – can lead to a life-and-death struggle where one seeks not only to defeat an opponent but to annihilate him. The primary issue, as I have indicated, is always how we *respond* to conflict. And here is where Dewey emphasizes the "role of consultation, of conference, of persuasion, of discussion in the formation of public opinion."[39] This is the practical issue that any living democracy confronts. One must do more than protect the rights of minorities and dissenters; one must work toward developing a culture in which plurality and difference of opinion are encouraged. Dewey

emphasized that without creative conflict there is the danger of complacency and stagnation. But a democracy degenerates into a sheer contest of wills and a naked power struggle if there is not a serious attempt to engage in deliberation and public debate – if there is not a serious attempt to establish the shared communal values in which there is reciprocal trust and respect.

DEMOCRACY, SOCIAL COOPERATION, AND EDUCATION

Axel Honneth has argued that Dewey's conception of democracy presents a model of radical democracy that is superior to two of the prevailing models that are currently discussed.

> In his endeavor to justify principles of an expanded democracy Dewey, in contrast to republicanism and to democratic proceduralism, takes his orientation not from the model of communicative consultation but from the model of social cooperation. In brief: because Dewey wishes to understand democracy as a reflexive form of community cooperation, he is able to bring together the two opposing positions of current democratic theory.

"Dewey's theory of democracy contains an answer that opens up a third avenue between the false option of an over ethicized republicanism and an empty proceduralism." Dewey understands "democratic ethical life as the outcome of the experience that all members of the society could have if they related to one another cooperatively through a just organizing of the division of labor."[40]

Ever since the "linguistic turn" there has been a tendency for democratic theorists to focus almost exclusively on the speech acts and linguistic procedures for adjudicating differences. But Dewey's vision of radical democracy is much thicker. It is not limited to deliberation or what has been called public reason; it encompasses and presupposes the full range of human experience. Democracy requires a robust democratic culture in which the attitudes, emotions, and habits that constitute a democratic *ethos* are embodied. Indeed, Dewey spoke of "intelligence" or "social intelligence" rather than "reason" because he strongly objected to thinking of "reason" as a special faculty that can be distinguished from our emotional and affective lives. Intelligence is not a faculty; it is a set of dispositions that involve imagination, sensitivity to the complexities of concrete

situations, the capacity to listen to other opinions, and a fallibilistic experimental attitude to solving problems. Intelligence involves a passionate commitment to the ends-in-view that one seeks to achieve, and a willingness to learn from one's mistakes.

From this perspective we can appreciate Dewey's life-long interest in education, especially the education of the young. The great hope for nurturing individuals who will be sensitive to social injustice and for developing the flexible habits of intelligence required for social reform is democratic public education. Already in "My Pedagogic Creed" (1897) Dewey insisted that "education is the fundamental method of social reform" and that "it is the business of every one interested in education to insist upon the school as the primary and the most effective interest in social progress and reform in order that society may be awakened to realize what the school stands for." Contrary to many distorted interpretations of Dewey's views on education, he was a sharp and persistent critic of sentimentalism. "[N]ext to deadness and dullness, formalism and routine, our education is threatened with no greater evil than sentimentalism ... this sentimentalism is the necessary result of the attempt to divorce feeling from action."[41]

Many of the points that I have been stressing about his vision of radical democracy are epitomized in the final paragraph of his essay, "Creative Democracy":

> Democracy as compared with other ways of life is the sole way of living which believes wholeheartedly in the process of experience as end as means; as that which is capable of generating science which is the sole dependable authority for the direction of further experience and which releases emotions, needs and desires so as to call into being things that have not existed in the past. For every way of life that fails in its democracy limits the contacts, the exchanges, the communications, the interactions by which experience is steadied while it is also enlarged and enriched. The task of this release and enrichment is one that has to be carried on day by day. Since it is one that can have no end till experience itself comes to an end, the task of democracy is forever that of creation of a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute.[42]

DEWEY'S CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

For all the attractiveness of Dewey's vision of radical democracy, he can be criticized on a number of counts. There is too little emphasis

on institutional analysis – on what sorts of institutions are required for a flourishing democracy. Perhaps the most serious weakness is the one that I mentioned earlier. Dewey declared that radical liberalism requires "a social goal based on an inclusive plan." But Dewey never spelled out the details of such an "inclusive plan." More seriously, although he always emphasized the need for fundamental economic changes to further the realization of radical democracy, he never indicated in detail what these should be. And, at times, Dewey fails to appreciate the powerful forces that resist the political and educational reforms that he called for. But these criticisms need to be tempered by the fact that Dewey was the leading social reformer of his time. He worked closely with Jane Addams at Hull House. He helped to found the American Civil Liberties Union, the New School for Social Research, the American Federation of Teachers, and many other progressive voluntary organizations. He was a staunch defender of freedom of speech and civil rights and led campaigns to defend the rights of Maxim Gorky and Bertrand Russell. Although he strongly identified with the American democratic tradition, his interests were international. He advised governmental officials, national groups, and educators in Japan, China, Turkey, Mexico, and South Africa. All these activities were informed by his radical democratic vision. Dewey was a "rooted cosmopolitan."[43] He strongly identified with an American Jeffersonian and Emersonian tradition. But there was nothing parochial about his vision of radical democracy. In both theory and practice he was deeply involved in encouraging democratic practices throughout the world. He was a thoroughly engaged democratic public intellectual. But Dewey also had a profound understanding of the fragility of democracy. Unless we constantly work at incorporating a democratic ethos into our everyday lives, democracy can all too easy become hollow and meaningless.

Today, in academic circles, there are lively debates about democratic theory. But, unfortunately, these debates are primarily addressed to other academics. Dewey had the rare ability to reach beyond the academy, to speak to a wide audience of citizens and to the concerns of common people. I do not think that we can turn to Dewey for solutions of the problems and threats to democracy in our time. Dewey would be the first to insist that new conflicts and problems require new approaches. But Dewey's vision of a radical democracy as "a personal way of individual life in which we open

ourselves to the fullness of communication" can still inspire us in our own endeavors to rethink and revitalize "really existing democracies." Creative democracy is still the task before us!

NOTES

1. J. Dewey, "What is Democracy?" (1946), *LW* 17:472.
2. J. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy" (1888), *EW* 1:228.
3. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 231; emphasis in the original.
4. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 231.
5. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 231.
6. J. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (1927), *LW* 2:328.
7. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 234.
8. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 236.
9. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 237.
10. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 238.
11. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 240; emphasis in the original.
12. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 240.
13. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 242.
14. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 241.
15. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," pp. 243–244.
16. R. B. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), xv.
17. J. Dewey, "Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us" (1939), *LW* 14:227.
18. Dewey, "Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us," p. 226.
19. Dewey, "Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us," p. 227.
20. J. Dewey, "Democracy is Radical" (1937), *LW* 11:298–299; emphasis in the original.
21. A. Ryan, *John Dewey and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 369.
22. J. Dewey, "Introductory Statement of the Commission of Inquiry" (1937), *LW* 11:309.
23. J. Dewey, "Significance of the Trotsky Inquiry" (1937), *LW* 11:331.
24. Dewey has been justly criticized for his awkward prose, but he could write vividly and with great passion. His response to Trotsky, "Means and Ends," is an example of the best of Dewey's prose. J. Dewey, "Means and Ends: Their Interdependence, and Leon Trotsky's Essay on 'Their Morals and Ours'" (1938), *LW* 13:349–354.
25. Dewey, "Means and Ends," p. 354.
26. Dewey, "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy" (1917), *MW* 10:48. A frequent criticism of Dewey, even by those who are sympathetic with

him, has been that he lacks a profound sense of human evil and a tragic sense of life. For a refutation of this misguided view, see S. Hook, *Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1974); and E. S. Glaude Jr., *In a Shade of Blue: Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Glaude shows how Dewey's pragmatism – despite his neglect of the issue of racism – has the resources to illuminate the problems and opportunities that confront black Americans today. See also my book, *The Abuse of Evil: The Corruption of Politics and Religion since 9/11* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005).

27. J. Dewey, *Individualism: Old and New* (1930), *LW* 5:61. Some of Dewey's "left" critics, most notably Christopher Lasch, have accused him of advocating a "corporate liberalism," but as Alan Ryan notes:

> Lasch sees quite correctly, that Dewey's view of industrial society criticizes it from what one might loosely call a corporatist direction, but he misunderstands the consequences; *loosely* is of the essence, for Dewey's critique has nothing at all to do with the defense of a corporatist state or with a defense of the modern business corporation.
>
> Dewey disliked the modern business corporation in almost all its manifestations – its bureaucratic and hierarchal structure, its routinized working practices on the shop floor and in the offices of the white-collar staff, its divorce of management and real labor, and its remoteness from the interface of man and nature.

Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism*, p. 177.

28. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems*, p. 325.
29. Dewey, "Creative Democracy," p. 225.
30. J. Dewey, "Presenting Thomas Jefferson" (1940), *LW* 14:217.
31. M. J. Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 147.
32. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems*, p. 370.
33. J. Dewey, "The Future of Liberalism" (1935), *LW* 11:290.
34. Dewey, "The Future of Liberalism," p. 290.
35. J. Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action* (1935), *LW* 11:41.
36. Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," p. 237; emphasis in the original.
37. R. B. Westbrook, *Dewey and American Democracy*, p. 80.
38. H. Pitkin and S. Shumer, "On Participation," *Democracy* 2 (1982), 47–48.
39. Dewey, "Creative Democracy," p. 227.
40. A. Honneth, "Democracy as Reflexive Cooperation: John Dewey and the Theory of Democracy Today," *Political Theory* 26 (1998), 765, 780.
41. Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed" (1897), *EW* 5:93.

42. Dewey, "Creative Democracy," pp. 229–30.
43. The expression "rooted cosmopolitan" has taken on a life of its own in recent years, but I believe that Mitchell Cohen was the first to use this expression. See M. Cohen, "Rooted Cosmopolitanism: Thoughts on the left, Nationalism, and Multiculturalism," *Dissent* (1992), 478–483. For more on his democratic, international political thought, see Cochran, Chapter 14 in this volume.

MOLLY COCHRAN

14 Dewey as an international thinker

George Herbert Mead wrote that the most important and distinguishing way in which American life shaped its philosophy was the freedom Americans had to "work out immediate politics and business with no reverential sense of a pre-existing social order within which they must take their place and whose values they must preserve"; he concluded that "[i]n the profoundest sense John Dewey is the philosopher of America."[1] Dewey, like Mead, believed that philosophy exhibits a national character.[2] Dewey held that American philosophy was born out of the demands of democracy. For Dewey, this meant that it asked questions about how the individual should be conceived in relation to society and how each American might be actively engaged in the making of this new world.

However, while Dewey is considered to be a uniquely American philosopher, he was also an international thinker. Indeed, his international political thought was a product of his American philosophy. In reading Dewey on the subject of international politics one cannot help but be struck, first, by how global his world was and, second, how actively engaged Dewey was with international politics. Dewey began writing on international themes as early as 1902[3] and during World War I incorporated into his philosophy an understanding of the world as being linked in complex webs of interdependent relationships brought on by industrialization. Dewey's humanism and his belief that our thought must be derived from experience required that he be more than an American thinker. It is the aim of this chapter to explore the international political writings of Dewey.

Dewey generated a considerable body of political journalism, much of which was devoted to topics of international relations as evidenced in the two volumes of *Characters and Events*, Dewey's

work in this genre compiled and edited by Joseph Ratner in 1929. Dewey traveled widely outside of the United States. He took a number of European tours, lectured in Japan and China, spending most of 1919–21 teaching at the National University of Peking, traveled to Turkey, Mexico, and the USSR in the mid-1920s, and in 1937, at the age of seventy-eight, went to Mexico to chair the International Committee of Inquiry into the charges made against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials.[4] He was a founding member of the New York Branch of the American Committee for the Outlawry of War and the Council for a Democratic Germany,[5] and he was a leading member of the League of Free Nations and its successor, the Foreign Policy Association, and American Friends for Spanish Democracy.[6]

As interesting as Dewey's reflections are on the countries in which he traveled and on the revolutions in Russia, China, and Mexico, they are not the focus of my attention here. Also, it is not the intention of this chapter to provide another account of the one area in Dewey's thinking on international relations that has received significant scholarly attention, largely critical: his decision to support United States entry into World War I.[7] This chapter will address Dewey's writing on war, including World War I, but with a particular purpose in view: to examine more broadly Dewey's writing on international cooperation to discern what social conditions he thought necessary at the international level to facilitate his lifelong aim of creating democratic individuals. The chapter will also provide an account of contemporary scholarship in International Relations,[8] asking how recent trends may change what we believe about Dewey as an international thinker.

In late 1919 Dewey was compelled to retreat from the position he had articulated just two years before: that war could be used as an instrument for democratic ends. However, this was not the only important lesson he took away from the war period. The Great War made clear to Dewey that forces of international interdependence were making the world anew. Dewey had used the term "interdependence" prior to World War I, but only in the sense that Herbert Spencer first used it in 1884; that is, referring to the natural unity of society in a bound, organic whole – a domestic, rather than an international society. According to Dewey, the war demonstrated that commerce, industry, communications, and transportation were drawing individuals into interdependent relationships of

transnational scope and that "the problems of men," the focus of his philosophy, were international in character too. Rebuilding after the war, working from the facts as they presented themselves, meant for Dewey that one had to recognize: (1) that the Westphalian system of sovereign states was outmoded; (2) that international cooperation toward the improved management of forces of interdependence was destabilized both by the war system and by the "old diplomacy" of Europe; and (3) that international publics must find themselves and work to control international events, shaping a more inclusive, democratic world politics. These three themes pervade his international political writing and reflect an outgrowth of his American, philosophical preoccupation with what democracy and the release of human potentiality requires.

Recent developments in international politics and its academic study suggest a new relevance for Dewey's work on the subject. Since the end of the Cold War, IR scholarship has been reevaluating the starting points of its theorizing. Largely positivist in approach and focused upon the power and interests of nation-states clashing in an anarchic system, IR failed to predict the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the USSR. Also, this approach has proved ill-equipped in helping us understand why ideas such as democratic entitlement or norms, such as no first use of nuclear or chemical weapons, are working as limits on the behaviors of powerful states, or the important role international non-governmental organizations and social movements are playing in advancing and supporting norm change in world politics today.[9] New normative approaches to IR ask questions very similar to Dewey's: what scope is there for the moral inclusion of individuals as subjects of concern in international political decision-making?; are new political communities or new international organizations required to manage the effects of globalization upon affected individuals?; are there alternative forms of power[10] to material power that can be harnessed by marginalized groups to affect change in international politics?[11]

The end of the Cold War has had an impact on democratic political theory too, as have the antiglobalization protests in the late 1990s. Forces of fragmentation – the new civil conflicts that erupted and spilled across borders after the Cold War subsided – and forces of globalization – the effects of unregulated global capitalism and other transnational, environmental harms – have led democratic

theorists at the conclusion of the twentieth century to consider again what Dewey and other liberal internationalists were thinking in its early decades: that transnational processes are jeopardizing the fragile prospects of democracy within nation-states, and how we think about democracy and its requirements must broaden in scope too.[12] Today democratic theorists and normative IR theorists are thinking in terms of cosmopolitan or transnational democracy, asking what social norms and institutions are needed at the international level to promote democratic practice.

Of course, Dewey was not the first or only progressive thinker of this period to write about international interdependence, the need for international organization and cooperation, or the democratic reform of world politics, but he brings together several potent lines of inquiry for contemporary international concerns that cannot be found in any other twentieth-century writer. First, Dewey defines the next important step in our moral education as individuals; that is, moving beyond the arbitrary connection of one's moral education with the nation-state, and bringing democratic thought and scientific inquiry to the indeterminancies that affect humankind, not just fellow citizens. Second, he provides a constructive conceptual tool – the public – for thinking anew about democracy and power at the international level. Finally, he offers a normative guidepost – growth – for making decisions about how transnational processes are to be controlled democratically.

THE PROBLEM OF WESTPHALIAN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPACITIES

Dewey was a cosmopolitan thinker as well as a democratic one. If by a cosmopolitan thinker one has Immanuel Kant in mind, a central figure in the tradition, the characterization may seem misapplied to Dewey since he spent the better part of sixty years criticizing Archimedean-driven philosophy such as Kant's. Nonetheless, there are helpful comparisons and contrasts to be drawn between the two for the purpose of illuminating the nature of Dewey's cosmopolitanism. The different ways in which they arrived at cosmopolitan ends are important, but there are interesting similarities between their beliefs that: (1) the moral value of social institutions rests

upon whether they recognize the humanity of each individual and assist in the development of human capacities; and (2) the moral inclusion of individuals must be made effective in the relations between states.

For Kant, seeing the humanity of each individual meant understanding that we all are equal in our capacity to use reason, and through the use of reason form a conception of the good and live by it. The *Rechtsstaat* was morally significant for Kant, because it institutionalized recognition of this kind through the rule of law. In contrast, Dewey found ideas of human nature to be as varied and many as there are different social and political projects that can make use of their construction for the purpose of advancing a cause.[13] However, basic to such ideas was the notion that humans aim to direct change – change being an inescapable part of human life – and to do so in practical ways such that change can be deemed as "growth" or an advance on what came before. While we cannot "make any hard and fast distinction between the natural and the acquired, the native and the cultural," Dewey believed that all humans have a "capacity for modification"; that is, "a tendency to learn and hence to modify, and be modified," and that this is our "native stock," our intelligence.[14] Thus, for Dewey, the morality of social institutions rested upon whether or not they "equalize opportunity for all" to develop the intelligence that is native to each of us as human beings.[15] Democracy and individual growth were at one for Dewey. On this point, Dewey had little doubt and it is one of which many have to be convinced.[16] However, Dewey possessed a healthy skepticism about the state; it was an instrumentality, not something in itself to be revered. To be "state-minded," rather than "socially-minded," was to lose sight of this fact.[17] The measure of the state's moral significance was the extent to which it served as a mechanism for advancing democracy and unleashing human potential.

In fact, nation-states had played a role in this, according to Dewey, but current events of his day were outpacing their capacities in this regard. In Dewey's contribution to the 1908 *Ethics*, co-authored with James H. Tufts, he wrote: "The development of national States marks a tremendous step forward in the realization of the principle of a truly inclusive common good. But it cannot be the final step ... The idea of humanity in the abstract has been attained as a moral ideal. But the political organization of this conception, its embodiment in law and

administrative agencies, has not been achieved."[18] In 1932 when Dewey and Tufts rewrote and re-issued *Ethics*, Dewey continued writing in this vein, arguing that the "effective socialization of intelligence" could not be left to states as a purely domestic concern. The problem of how communities bring into harmony the realization of the distinctive capacities of each with the good of all others – the central dilemma posed by the democratic ideal – is an international one too, such that the "criterion of the greater good of all must be extended beyond the nation, as in the past it has been expanded beyond confines of family and clan."[19] Why? It was Dewey's view that the system of states, or the "inherited political system" as Dewey wrote, sat "like a straitjacket" on the industrial, global economic forces that in his estimation were the future, "the moving, the controlling forces of the modern world."[20]

For Kant, the universality of humanity and rationality required peace – a peace that would be made possible by the creation of a world federation of republican states that renounced any so-called "right" to wage war.[21] He also asserted the need for a cosmopolitan right of hospitality to foreigners, his assault on the men-versus-citizens divide. But each of his proposals for perpetual peace was directed at states, their behaviors and duties, with no amendments to the Westphalian system beyond federation. Dewey too believed that world federation and the outlawry of war was important to the change the relations between states required, but it could not rest there with states alone. As early as 1918, Dewey was writing that *non-state* agencies with functional roles generated by the consequences of international interdependence must gain legitimacy as international actors alongside states and state-based international organizations. In order to have "a world *in* which democracy is safely anchored, the solution will be in the direction of a federated world government and a variety of freely experimenting and freely cooperating self-governing local, cultural and industrial groups."[22] In Dewey's view, this was not a utopian fantasy. The war had already created such agencies. Dewey wrote:

> [e]very day the "Associated Governments" are dealing with questions of the distribution of shipping, raw materials, food, money and credit, and so on. Nobody who thinks believes that these problems will be less pressing after peace. On the contrary, they will become more urgent in some respects ... New problems of the distribution of labor, immigration, production for

exportation will emerge. To annihilate or reduce the agencies of international regulation which already exist would be an act of incredible wantonness. Not to stabilize and expand their scope would be one of almost incredible stupidity.[23]

Stabilizing and expanding their scope meant some centralization at first through a world federation or international government for Dewey. Most important, that government would understand that its effectiveness in international conflict resolution required that it take up responsibility for managing human economic and social needs arising from cross-border relations as well as outlawing war, something Kant never suggested beyond a preliminary article to his idea of perpetual peace which prohibited the accruing of foreign debts.

There was a role for states, for intergovernmental organization, for non-governmental agencies, and for individuals too in restructuring international politics, according to Dewey. Another critical component to unleashing human potential at the international level was a matter of individuals expanding their moral learning.[24] Interestingly, in "Progress," Dewey developed an idea similar to Kant's in his essay, "What is Enlightenment?": that each of us as individuals has a responsibility for progress in the human condition.[25] The character of that responsibility in the case of Dewey is a "responsibility for intelligence," anticipating, inquiring, and planning with a view to acting in connection with things as they are. Even before the war, but more pronounced during the war, one finds the argument in Dewey that the next stage in our moral education as individuals is to overturn the men-versus-citizen divide that humanity's separation into nation-state units breeds. We must see through to our cosmopolitan attachments. Individuals should engage in inquiry that examines what impedes and what facilitates international social conditions that generate genuine human concern, because, as Dewey wrote, "if the present situation makes anything clear it is that there is almost a total lack of any machinery by which the factors which continue to represent civilization may make their claims effective."[26]

Dewey also invested Americans with a special role in this activity. The American philosophy which he believed to be born out of the demands of democracy also bore this responsibility: to "*respond* to the demands of democracy, as democracy strives to voice and to achieve itself on a vaster scale, and in a more thorough and final

way than history has previously witnessed."[27] Not only is there a responsibility on enterprising and experimentally minded Americans to create and improve upon democratic machinery at home, but also their efforts may offer lessons that could be helpful to others outside of America. Dewey wrote that democracy, as an ideal, was "at once too subtle and too complex and too aspiring to be caught in the meshes of a single philosophical school or sect."[28] The ideal of democracy was expansionable beyond the culture and society of America and it had special relevance to wider concerns about international peace and justice.

In sum, Dewey's cosmopolitanism arises from his American philosophy. If the national character of philosophy is, as Dewey writes, a reflection of the problems of men linked in the conditions of that community, then problems related to consequences of transnational scope could conceivably bind those who share these vulnerabilities and be the basis of a cosmopolitan moral philosophy and politics. Dewey writes in the 1908 *Ethics*, that our "chief moral business is to become acquainted with consequences."[29] Thus, if the expansion of "harm" due to "inconsiderate action" resulting from interdependence is linking strangers into transnational communities, then our moral education requires that we learn our responsibilities to distant others irrespective of nation-state boundaries and act on them. This is a compelling argument that one finds reflected in contemporary normative IR theory today.[30] However, the idea that America has a special role to play in this kind of education, a notion that will reappear in the following section too, is more problematic, as will be seen below.

THE NEW WORLD AS A MODEL FOR RECONFIGURING INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Dewey's international political writing acknowledged that the Great War had exposed America as being at once democratic and non-democratic,[31] and at the war's conclusion he admitted that the experiment of American participation in the war had not generated the transformation of international politics that he had hoped for.[32] Nevertheless, he held on to his conviction that America was a example of democratic possibility; Dewey wrote that America had a distinctive spirit and that if this new country did not "already mark an

attainment of a distinctive culture on the part of American civilization, and give the promise and potency of a new civilization, Columbus merely extended and diluted the Old World. But I still believe that he discovered a New World."[33] For Dewey, there are "certain recurrent and fundamental problems, which humanity, collectively and individually, has to face,"[34] and the American culture of democracy offers a practice and a politics that can usefully assist problem-solving at the level of human problems of a transnational scope. Dewey wanted to educate all in the culture of democracy that America had bred, and his pragmatism provided a method by which such problem-solving could proceed and be found to possess truth or warranted assertability. This section will: (1) describe the nature of the American model of democracy that Dewey wanted to bring to international politics; (2) explore just what Dewey got wrong, and why, in connection with US involvement in World War I and his other adopted international political project, the outlawry of war; and (3) conclude with an evaluation of these tests of Dewey's instrumentalism.

Dewey's writing on international cooperation can be best understood as an attempt to test democracy as a "working hypothesis" for this realm. It was the crisis of World War I that sparked the need for experimentation in this area in Dewey's mind and in the minds of other progressive internationalists. As Dewey wrote in his essay, "Progress" in 1916, the crisis itself was not to be welcomed, but he welcomed the opportunity it presented for re-setting our habits of thought in relation to the rapid social change that was taking place and in divesting individuals of the easy assumption that change equals progress. Instead, Dewey wanted to see humans give direction to change; that was what engendered progress. However, the primary obstacle in the way of such progress was the character of the "Old World" and its tradition of diplomacy.

The Old World generated ideas that were dogmatic and fixed, rather than dynamic. Its people took no responsibility for their respective governments. Old World diplomacy was in the hands of an aristocratic class who demonstrated an "ignorance of modern forces" and who were left to muddle in their incompetence.[35] The monarchs of Europe fueled nationalist feeling by fanning the embers of smoldering grievances that centuries of war had generated to energize their new wars of expansion in Europe and beyond. By Dewey's

understanding a "new diplomacy" was needed. Such a call was not uncommon among internationally minded progressives of the day who spoke for the need to democratize world politics: that is, generate openness and transparency through measures such as forbidding secret treaties, replacing force with the rule of law and creating international machinery to arbitrate conflict between states, and even providing some measure of international social and economic services.[36] However, Dewey linked the invocation of a "new diplomacy" metaphorically to the meaning of America as the "New World" and claimed that America was a laboratory generating the kind of instrumentalities that might contribute to the democratic management of international relations.

To begin, America was a model for the kind of social and political restructuring needed to facilitate international cooperation toward the improved management of forces of interdependence. Apart from being, as he romantically wrote, "truly interracial and international," two other successes of the "great social experiment" that was America were its establishment as a federation and its separation of nationality from citizenship. First, America was an example to the world of what world federation could be, giving political demonstration to "*e pluribus unum*, where the unity does not destroy the many, but maintains each constituent factor in full vigor."[37] Second, according to Dewey, America had resolved one of the most intractable problems of the Old World, minority rights. According to Dewey:

> Not only have we separated the church from the state, but we have separated language, cultural traditions, all that is called race, from the state – that is, from problems of political organization and power. To us language, literature, creed, group ways, national culture, are social rather than political, human rather than national, interests. Let this idea fly abroad; it bears healing in its wings.[38]

Of course, Dewey was over-egging the pudding in his effort to ground in an example of existing social conditions what others thought to be a utopian or idealist notion: international federation. He did not believe that America was without these tensions,[39] or that the idea of this kind of separation had in fact solved the problem of minority rights in America.[40] This is, however, a potent example of how Dewey was not immune to slipping into the language and

tactics of the rhetorician as he participated in the fray of public intellectual debate during these war years.

In 1916, Dewey was thinking about the concept of force with a view to finding some "*via media* between the Tolstoian, to whom all force is violence and all violence evil, and that glorification of force which is so easy when war arouses turbulent emotion."[41] In "Force and Coercion," Dewey asked what role, if any, force played in progress. Since all politics involves a struggle for power, the question for Dewey was whether force could be used for ends that further social organization, and he argued that force could be controlled and applied rationally to the shared ends of a community. The key for Dewey was that the use of coercive power must be the product of intelligent inquiry into means and ends and only issued when the conclusion is reached that the most effective route to achieving the desired goal is this kind of force; otherwise the result is violence and waste. As he wrote, "older and coarser forms of liberty may be obstructive; efficiency may then require the use of coercive power to abrogate their exercise."[42] By 1918, Dewey was willing to argue that the older, coarser obstruction in the way of future liberty was the old diplomacy of Europe. America needed to "recover something of the militant faith of our forefathers that America is a great idea, and add to it an ardent faith in our capacity to lead the world to see what this idea means as a model for its own future well-being."[43]

According to Dewey, the pacifists should have known that once the *Lusitania* was sunk, so too was the cause of US neutrality.[44] The rise of Germany, its militancy and increasing international anarchy in Europe required that the US must enter the war. "A task has to be accomplished to abate an international nuisance, but in the accomplishing there is the prospect of a world organization and the beginnings of a public control which crosses nationalistic boundaries and interests."[45] Dewey understood that the decision to use war to achieve this end was not without risk, but he thought it "gives an immense opportunity for it, an opportunity which justifies the risk."[46] However, by 1919 he was weighing the question, "Were not those right who held that it was self-contradictory to try to further the permanent ideals of peace by recourse to war?"[47] He was not yet ready to say they were in fact right. Instead, he wrote that it was important that Germany was defeated – in Dewey's mind this could not have been done without US involvement – and that ideals

sometimes require this kind of coercive power to have effect. The problem was that America failed to use force "adequately and intelligently."[48] The negotiations at Versailles showed that the US was co-opted into assisting Europe with its Old World aims of dominion and imperialism. In particular, US failure rested in not recognizing that those who won the war were unfit for negotiating its peace and, thus, popular representation should have been an element of the peace conference. Wilson was not sufficient in himself to represent the interests of those who wanted a just peace and to win it at Versailles.

However, Dewey wanted to make the point to his audience that war was but one kind of force, coercive power of an extreme sort, and there remained a range of force that could be efficiently used. Thus, for Dewey:

> the issue is not that of indulging in ideals versus using force in a realistic way. As long as we make this opposition we render our ideals impotent, and we play into the hands of those who conceive force as primarily military. Our idealism will never prosper until it rests upon the organization and resolute use of the greater forces of modern life: industry, commerce, finance, scientific inquiry and discussion and the actualities of human companionship.[49]

Within a few years Dewey was no longer willing to contemplate military force as an instrument for idealism. In his 1923 essay, "Political Combination or Legal Cooperation," he admitted that "the war created an illusion of real unity to which many fell victims, myself among the number."[50] That unity could not survive the peace and end the use of war in the way its victims once believed it might. Old antagonisms from bygone battles weighed heavily on the efforts to build a new diplomatic practice, and the lesson that settled upon Dewey was that, first and foremost, the instrumentality that could best effect a reconstruction of world politics was the outlawry of war. "When certain means have proved that they lead to conflict and friction, it is the part of elementary prudence to seek other means which will cut under or go around the forces that cause the trouble."[51]

Dewey was a prominent and influential advocate for the outlawry of war. He wrote that "[a] world which legitimizes recourse to war will always be on the verge of war."[52] Dewey noted that international politics was the only field of human relations in which the use of violence was given official sanction and considered a right of states

under international law, leaving one to ask what chance there was that "future peace efforts of mankind are really going to be more successful in reducing or preventing war than the efforts of the past have been until this condition of things is changed."[53] For Dewey, the outlawry of war also required the support of a new world court. The tribunals that emerged from the Hague Conference and from the League of Nations were non-starters for Dewey, because they supported and were supported by an international law that authorized war. A permanent, international supreme court would "substitute judicial decisions for war as a method of settling disputes among nations."[54] Lastly, Dewey put these instrumentalities for international social reconstruction before all others, because "If nations will not carry their willingness to cooperate to the negative and formal point of outlawing war and the positive point of providing an international supreme court, it is ridiculous to suppose that they will go to the extreme required for constructive political cooperation."[55]

There were several reasons why the League of Nations was not an instrumentality for Dewey's working hypothesis – the idea of democracy institutionalized at the international level. The important postwar questions were not its responsibility, but the responsibility of the commissions composed of the victors enforcing the Versailles Treaty. Also, it was not truly international because neither Russia nor Germany was allowed to join as members. Most problematic for Dewey was the fact that the League was a forum of governments alone and these governments were still in possession of their sovereign right to war. The League included no mechanisms for popular representation. It would be the old international politics as usual.

Dewey got a number of important things wrong about the international politics of this period. The two programs for change over which Dewey spilled the most ink were the use of war for democratic purposes, followed by his support for the outlawry of war. He misjudged the matter of the use of war in World War I and again just over twenty years later when he could not bring himself to conclude that war was the appropriate instrument against the rise of Fascist totalitarianism in Europe, and reluctantly supported US involvement in the war after Pearl Harbor. Outlawry too was an unworkable instrument within this turbulent period. While the cause enjoyed momentum in the 1920s, and the Pact of Paris or the Kellogg–Briand Pact renouncing war as an instrument of national policy was

signed in 1928, the Pact was soon tested and considered a failure with the military action launched by two of its signatories; Japan in Manchuria in 1931 and Italy in Abyssinia in 1935. Dewey had acknowledged that there were two critical vulnerabilities within outlawry as a program for radical change: (1) it would not work as long as states maintained a right to "defensive" war and; (2) it must enjoy the moral conviction of world public opinion. Dewey believed that the Pact got too far ahead of international public opinion and where it needed to be for outlawry to succeed. That is, world public opinion had to guide international officials toward the idea of outlawry, rather than the other way around. "Unless the moral sentiment of the world has reached the point of condemning war there is nothing that can be done about it."[56] Outlawry may have failed for these or conceivably other reasons. Nonetheless, Dewey could be faulted for putting this proposal ahead of other programs for change that he might otherwise have given his attention.[57]

Dewey's faith in the capacity of humanity to adapt and find improved ways of living must have experienced considerable strain under the international politics of his day, witnessing as he did two world wars, world economic depression, the advent of nuclear weapons, and the Korean War. More often than not he urged Americans to take on international responsibilities, but there were moments, just after World War I in particular, when he warned that foreign entanglements could weaken America's delicate democracy. American democracy could go the way of European democracies such as France and the UK – generating *non-democratic* foreign policies – if beyond America's complicity in Versailles it continued to dabble in Old World alliances.[58] Are contradictions such as these and the errors of judgment in connection with programs for democratic change he advocated cause for rejecting Dewey's instrumentalism and pragmatism more generally?

What gets obscured by the critics who focus upon the shifts in Dewey's thinking and argue, as his former student Randolph Bourne did, that he was unskilled at practicing his own pragmatic instrumentalism,[59] is that throughout his international writing Dewey followed the same method he described in his 1908 essay, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical." There he wrote that the aim in relation to "working hypotheses" is "to arrive at and to clarify their *meaning as programs for modifying the existent world*."[60] The method sets in

motion a process whereby ideas are put out there into experience, like trial balloons, to see if they do what is intended of them in the way of solving social and political problems. If "existences, following upon the actions, rearrange or readjust themselves in the way the idea intends, the idea is true."[61] As instruments for acting in connection with problematic situations, ideas are at once practical and moral, but their truth is provisional and lasts only as long as an idea works as a solution. The changes in Dewey's thinking are responses to self-admitted, failed practical judgments on his part, and are a symptom of Dewey trying "to arrive at and to clarify" what democracy as a working hypothesis for the international realm meant programmatically in a tumultuous period of international history.

Among his contemporaries, Dewey was not the only one to fail in this respect. The realist approach to the study of IR established an ascendency for nearly five decades after the Great War on the foundation of its critique of progressive internationalism, or idealism. No one succeeded in offering a program of international democratic change that could establish and sustain itself in this period that began so hopefully, but ultimately relied on "lights that failed."[62] The critical matter for Dewey's instrumentalism is not whether these particular programs were unsuccessful, but whether dark moments in world history such as these undermine any and all basis for the conviction that motivated the international social experimentation Dewey was advocating: that is, Dewey's understanding that humans use their intelligence to adapt to changing conditions as human welfare requires over time. Dewey felt that evolutionary theory supported his belief, and not even the times in which he lived extinguished his personal conviction that human adaptation is assisted by a method of social inquiry modeled on natural science; social institutions that are guided by what the democratic ideal intends in relation to the development of the human capacities of all; and a responsibility felt on the part of individuals that we all have a part to play in making the world in which we live and in contributing to purposes held in common among those linked in communities of varied scope.

Today new approaches within IR – constructivism, those modeled on a concept of an international society, and normative approaches – share Dewey's conviction that social learning can and does take place at the international level in response to changed conditions of

intersocietal living, and this social learning is changing the behaviors of states as they interact within the structures of international institutions and norms that have grown more extensive and encompassing in the years since World War II. The next section examines whether international social conditions today reflect one of Dewey's most potent, but underdeveloped thoughts concerning another possible mechanism for radical democratic change at the international level: the concept of the international public.[63]

INTERNATIONAL PUBLICS: A MORE DEMOCRATIC INTERNATIONAL FUTURE?

In 1992, the IR theorist Alexander Wendt famously wrote: "anarchy is what states make of it."[64] His point was that international politics is not determined by anarchy and the distribution of power between states, but instead, any "logic" attached to anarchy is one the relevant actors – states – have constructed in a process of social and political exchange. It is not beyond states to change that logic or re-direct it. Dewey would not disagree. However, he is more ready than Wendt to posit an ideal toward which that process should be re-directed – democratic inclusion – and he is unwilling to leave it to just states and state officials to make this happen. Repeated throughout Dewey's international political writings is the idea that the restructuring of international politics must be inspired by the public and controlled by the public. Anarchy is what publics make of it.

While Dewey did not believe the public control of global forces was at hand, he did think it held genuine possibility – that world public opinion was capable of harnessing a kind of power, giving individuals world political agency – and it was an important democratic condition for lasting international peace.[65] Dewey liked to point to what just one individual could do in the way of directing international change, writing of the example set by Samuel Levinson and his American Committee for the Outlawry of War and the path his work paved for the Pact of Paris.[66] Yes, there were considerable obstacles in the way of this kind of public control, but Dewey did not see them as fixed and immovable. Instead, they were "habits" of thought and action such as war system thinking;[67] international anarchy or the notion that states have an "unquestionable right" to do what they want to do irrespective of the effects upon others;[68] and

an undiscriminating world public opinion that lacked the education it needed to overcome "the old ethic of national honor and defense of prestige."[69] Dewey believed that practical necessities arising from the modern international condition would energize new social mechanisms of public control. The impetus for international restructuring would come from individuals who bore the deprivations of the war system and the negative impacts of poorly managed international interdependence, and who would somehow discover each other and a common will to direct international change into more constructive channels along functional lines.

Dewey's 1927 book, *The Public and its Problems*, is more typically thought of as a discourse on domestic publics, since in it he defines the state and describes the problems of American democracy in the industrial age. However, what his international political journalism demonstrates is that Dewey was thinking along the lines of functional publics organized around the effects of shared, indirect consequences well before 1927, and unconstrained by geography or national boundaries. For Dewey, a public is an instrument through which problem-solving is socially coordinated. There is nothing "essential" about the scope of a public as such. What is public and what is private is something that can only be tested experimentally, but the starting point for this kind of experimentation is human acts and their consequences: those that affect persons directly engaged are private, and those that affect persons who are not immediately engaged are public.[70] Dewey never put the adjective "international" in front of the word "public" when he used it, but the idea that not just national, but international publics should integrate was embedded in his international writing.

Of course, the problem he identified for democratic politics in 1927 – the difficulty of discovering a collective public interest in problem-solving in a technological age that has "multiplied, intensified, and complicated the scope of the indirect consequences"[71] – is even more acute with respect to problems of a transnational scope. Nonetheless, he did not shrink from advocating the kind of international education, cooperation, publicity, and communication that could assist the recognition of overarching international publics as well. Also, he wrote of a pattern of intersocial interaction, that if extended and normalized in times of peace too, could make collective will formation at the international level possible: that is, a kind of

post-Westphalian social learning fostered by repeated cross-border social interaction, exchange, and cooperation among vocational groups as international problem-solving necessitated.[72] As Dewey wrote, "All of these things mean the discovery of the interdependence of all peoples, and the development of a more highly organized world, a world knit together by more conscious and substantial bonds."[73]

In Dewey's effort to describe how individual freedom and growth – that is, democratic life – could be made compatible with social organization of whatever scope, he turned to the logic of scientific research as a method for finding remedies to the indeterminate social situations that individuals face. Dewey believed that the next scientific revolution to come would be that of humans applying their knowledge to social problems.[74] As productive beings who construct and reconstruct their worlds to create new meanings and significances and who enjoy what is added by this productive activity, individuals recognize in the process that any growth that they achieve is not found in isolation. The need for discovery is prompted by the recognition of problematic situations that exist in our natural and social worlds, and the "how" of their transformation can only be found experimentally in cooperation with others – either in a scientific community or in a public that has come to recognize a shared interest in solving a common problem – in a reflexive process of scientific and social inquiry. Dewey's idea of social scientific method closely followed scientific method, the principal difference being one of starting point: science begins with natural phenomena; social science with morals. Nevertheless, science and inquiry into the democratic control of social organization share these virtues: an experimental attitude; creativity; cooperative consultation with others; openness to difference; and a willingness to revise one's views. Dewey's embrace of democracy and the priority he placed on scientific method are closely allied. Publics are in effect both democratic communities and epistemic communities, producing knowledge that helps individuals adapt and make more meaningful worlds for themselves in accordance with shared needs forged by shared circumstances.[75]

Is Dewey's idea of individuals shaping global political decisions through participation in international publics so far-fetched today? When Dewey wrote in 1918 that there is a "consequent necessity of agencies for public oversight and direction in order that the interdependence ['the interweaving of interests and occupations'] may

become a public value instead of being used for private levies,"[76] he can be seen as anticipating the demands of developing countries and the will of activists who came together in their tens of thousands at the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Seattle, November 30, 1999, to protest against the unfairness of the current model of free trade. Evidence for Dewey's belief that individuals could increase their share of control through voluntary organizations, rather than invest all authority for the conduct of international affairs in government officials, can be found in the successes of transnational, non-governmental organizations gaining access to international decision-making fora, shaping agendas of discussion, and even influencing outcomes as in, for example, the case of the work of the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice at the Rome Conference in 1998 that created the International Criminal Court (ICC). Their advocacy, the information and expertise they shared with state delegations and the publicity they sought for their cause, was critical to the codification of crimes of sexual and gender-based violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity under the ICC.[77]

Also, Dewey's idea that more was needed of what developed during the crises of the two world wars – groupings of private individuals, industrialists, and state bureaucrats who came together to meet the basic requirements of individuals across the globe for things such as food and fuel provision – is at work and greatly expanded in international society today. Not only has the United Nations assumed responsibilities for human security, addressing the unmet needs of individuals with respect to food, clean water, health, labor protection, education, trade, culture and development, but its Economic and Social Council and Specialized Agencies are being supported by another structure of global governance – what Anne-Marie Slaughter has described as the "real new world order." This is a "new, transgovernmental order" in which the international problems of today such as terrorism, drug and human trafficking, climate change, bank failure, and securities fraud are being addressed by disaggregated parts of states that serve specialized functions – courts and regulatory agencies – working in networks with their counterparts across the world.[78] States remain the central actors in world politics and their elites still control international decision-making, but there has been no small degree of transformation too. Those elites, across more areas than in Dewey's day, have been forced to hear and speak to, if not in some

cases concede to, the demands of those lacking their same material and institutional power. World politics has moved in the direction advocated by Dewey: toward the governance of the indirect consequences of international interdependence, and via *multiple* routes, such that a more democratic international practice might be constructed through a diversification of sources (state-based and non-governmental) by which individuals can influence and direct international change in accordance with their needs.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that "intelligence in the modern world,"[79] or Dewey's pragmatic instrumentalism applied to problems of international relations, deserves reevaluation on a longer view and in the context of recent developments in the study and practice of international relations. Today, one finds that his idea that the democratic ideal should guide a restructuring of world politics was not misjudged. In fact, social change in the direction of a broader, democratic inclusion of individuals of a kind Dewey intended is in process.[80] Access points to international decision-making are more open and diverse than they have been before, and new communication technologies are facilitating if not the kind of face-to-face communication for which Dewey was so nostalgic, at least the possibility of virtual communities or publics finding each other electronically across vast distances. Democracy is being invoked as an international norm of good governance both within and between states. Thus, the question is no longer whether democracy is an idea worth trying at the international level. That trial balloon is aloft. The matters that remain, and the reasons why Dewey's pragmatism continues to have significance for international politics, are the following questions: in what form is democracy workable across international society, and what kind of international moral education and international social restructuring needs to be affected in connection with it?

Dewey talked about democracy as an ideal built on a faith in the capacities of all human beings to act intelligently, to cultivate a habit of mind that facilitated critical inquiry – that is, "wide sympathy, keen sensitiveness, persistence in the face of the disagreeable, balance of interests"[81] – and to apply this habit of mind to problematic situations when they arose. Democracy as a culture or way of life runs

deeper, better approximating the ideal, where social institutions make it possible for all individuals with no discrimination of race, nationality, class, or gender to engage intelligently with their social environment. Thus, democracy is both an end and a method for finding improved ways of coping with what experience throws our way. Neither the end of democracy, nor the idea of the social institutions required, is reified by Dewey. Instead, the process of social learning or adaptation is all:

> the process of experience is more important than any special result attained, so that special results achieved are of ultimate value only as they are used to enrich and order the ongoing process ... faith in democracy is all one with faith in experience and education.[82]

The end of democracy is growth, and its lack of specification beyond the human need to adapt better to change and the method it provides for doing so is what makes it particularly expansionable – a necessary condition of its applicability within the diversity and plurality of international society. Grounded in the way that Dewey's end of growth is in human drives and impulses, rather than in a metaphysical account of what it is to be human, is key to its expansionability. However, Dewey's moral psychological account is not without risk of feeling like an external imposition on the individual who does not share Dewey's idea of what making adaptation meaningful means,[83] nor is Dewey's tendency to identify America as a model of democracy to the world and its citizens as having a special role in facilitating cosmopolitan and democratic education to others internationally without risk of feeling like an external imposition, culturally speaking.[84] However, the point to be made here is that the value of growth as a goal rests in its open-endedness and potentiality. Dewey is as careful as he can be not to prescribe an ultimate standard and prejudge the process of inquiry and experimentation in problem-solving that may take place within publics of any scope.

Dewey's critics complained during World War I that the end of growth that guided critical inquiry was so vague as to justify almost anything.[85] However, as Dewey's own activism in connection with problems of international relations shows, his idea of what this end could or could not sanction was not without content. True, values other than epistemic ones guiding inquiry cannot be set in advance and are determined in the process of inquiry itself. However, the

guiding aim of inquiry, realizing the capacities of humanity, and what that means might be better understood if I invoke a term that Dewey did not use that often, but is illustrative for our purposes here: "social capital." He wrote that:

> a society that does not furnish the environment and education and the opportunity of all kinds which will bring out and make effective the superior ability wherever it is born, is not merely doing an injustice to that particular race and to those particular individuals, but it is doing an injustice to itself for it is depriving itself of just that much of social capital.[86]

Extrapolating from this for international society, one could see how situations involving human trafficking, unfair wages and conditions in the factories of multinational corporations, child soldiering, illicit drug and arms trading, and military force used by states and non-state groups imposing narrow, unilateral ends could be regarded as problematic and requiring pointed inquiry and experimentation.

So what does this notion of democracy as an ideal applied experimentally to international relations mean in a programmatic sense going forward? First and foremost, the possibility of transnational democratic will formation depends upon the continuation and expansion of our moral education as Dewey described it. International interdependence has made this possible; as Dewey wrote, physically we are all one, and now it is up to "human beings – interested that men everywhere have a society of peace, of security, of opportunity, of growth in cooperation – can assure its being made *morally* one."[87] Also, we need to clarify and arrive at a variety of social mechanisms, and not depend on states and state-based institutions alone to make more democracy globally according to Dewey.[88] This means strengthening and institutionalizing where possible bottom-up mechanisms of public control to facilitate the emergence of international publics where needs are found in common. Dewey thought that this would be assisted where post-Westphalian forms of intersocietal interaction were allowed more play, and interestingly we see today that there are many more and various outlets for bottom-up control of or influence on international decision-making.

Dewey made some notable missteps in the prescriptions he experimented with in his day, but as he wrote in "Philosophy and Democracy": "error is an inevitable ingredient of reality, and man's business is not to avoid it – or to cultivate the illusion that it is mere

appearance – but to turn it to account, to make it fruitful."[89] As it turns out, Dewey's pragmatism applied to human problems in connection with international relations today could be especially fruitful. His failures of inquiry into what the idea of democracy as a working hypothesis for the international realm required does not necessarily falsify his method; a discredited hypothesis in natural science does not tear down scientific method. Instead, what would cripple pragmatic method as described by Dewey would be to lose all bases for faith in our human capacities to adapt and find meaning in adaptation. In 1945, Dewey said what would undermine this faith of his: "if the atomic splitting by science and its technological application in the bomb fail[s] to teach us that we live in a world of change so that our ways of organization of human interrelationships must also change, the case is well-nigh hopeless."[90] Thus far, by this criterion, we may or may not have cause to keep faith with Dewey, but at the very least, Dewey's reputation as an international thinker is due reconsideration and rehabilitation in today's world.

NOTES

I would like to thank Mikulas Fabry, Edward Keene, and Robert Westbrook for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

1. G. H. Mead, "The Philosophies of Royce, James, and Dewey in their American Setting," *International Journal of Ethics*, 40 (1930), 230–1.
2. J. Dewey, "Philosophy and American National Life" (1904), *MW* 3:73–4.
3. The first mention of international politics and the expansion of contacts across national boundaries that I can find in Dewey's writing is J. Dewey, "As Concerns Secondary Education" (1902), *MW* 1:285.
4. Center for Dewey Studies, "Chronology of Dewey's Life and Work," compiled by B. Levine, available at: www.siu/~deweyctr/resources.htm#chronology.
5. See, respectively, John Dewey to Samuel O. Levinson 1923.05.15 (02772), *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, ed. Larry Hickman, vol. 2 (Charlottesville: InteLex, 2005); and Reinhold Niebuhr to John Dewey, 1944.05.22 (13119) *The Correspondence*, vol. 3.
6. See, respectively, Samuel O. Levinson to John Dewey 1918.12.03 (02724) *The Correspondence*, vol. 1, and Robert Paddock to John Dewey 1929.10.19 (06266), *The Correspondence*, vol. 2.
7. See, for example, A. Cywar, "John Dewey in World War I," *American Quarterly* 21 (1969), 578–595; J. P. Diggins, "John Dewey in Peace and War," *The American Scholar* 50 (1981), 213–230; J. Ferrell, "John Dewey

and World War I: Armageddon Tests a Liberal's Faith," *Perspectives in American History* 9 (1975), 299–342; S. Kaplan, "Social Engineers as Saviors: Effects of World War I on some American Liberals," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17 (1956), 247–269; and C. Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America* (New York: Knopf, 1965), pp. 181–224.

8. Throughout the rest of the chapter, I will distinguish the academic study of International Relations from its subject, international relations, with the notation 'IR'.
9. IR is exploring new methods of inquiry that include both normative and empirical analysis, and Dewey's own mediation of these types of inquiry could be helpful to IR as it reconsiders what kind of social science it should be. See M. Cochran, "Deweyan Pragmatism and Post-positivist Social Science in IR," *Millennium: Journal of International Affairs* 30 (2002), 525–548.
10. Westbrook and I share the view that Dewey was far from being ignorant of or uninterested in power as Reinhold Niebuhr famously charged in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (New York: Scribners, 1932). As Westbrook writes, Dewey had "an abiding commitment to a more equitable and democratic distribution of power among the nations and peoples of the world," and his aim was to put power in the hands of the people, in democratic movements that would change the way elites made foreign policy. See Robert Westbrook, "An Innocent Abroad? John Dewey and International Politics," *Ethics and International Affairs* 7 (1993), 204 and 208 respectively.
11. Examples of this literature include C. Brown, *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); M. Cochran, *Normative Theory in International Relations: A Pragmatic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); M. Frost, *Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); A. Linklater, *The Transformation of International Political Community* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998); R. Shapcott, *Justice, Community and Dialogue in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
12. See, for example, D. Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); J. Dryzek, *Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006); J. Bohman, *Democracy across Borders: From Dêmos to Dêmoi* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2007). I. M. Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), chapter 7.
13. J. Dewey, "Human Nature" (1932), *LW* 6:30, 37.
14. Dewey, "Human Nature," p. 32.

15. J. Dewey and J. H. Tufts, *Ethics* (1908), *MW* 5:431.
16. I must thank Robert Westbrook for this point.
17. J. Dewey, "Social Absolutism" (1921) *MW* 13:313.
18. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, pp. 430–431.
19. J. Dewey and J. H. Tufts, *Ethics* (1932), *LW* 7:371.
20. J. Dewey, "Future of Pacifism" (1917) *MW* 10:269.
21. I. Kant, *Political Writings*, ed. H. S. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 93–130.
22. J. Dewey, "What Are We Fighting For?" (1918), *MW* 11:105–106; emphasis in the original.
23. J. Dewey, "The Approach to a League of Nations" (1918), *MW* 11:129–130. There are interesting similarities between Dewey on these points and literatures that develop later in IR on international functionalism and neofunctionalism.
24. This is a very good illustration at the international level of the point James Bohman makes in Chapter 9 in this volume: that Dewey avoided what he saw as a false dilemma between the two main schools of social reform in his day. For Dewey, progress is a matter of changing human sentiment and social institutions, not one or the other.
25. Kant, *Political Writings*, pp. 54–60.
26. J. Dewey, "Progress" (1916), *MW* 10:242.
27. J. Dewey, "Philosophy and American National Life" (1905), *MW* 3:74; my emphasis added.
28. Dewey, "Philosophy and American National Life," p. 74.
29. Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics* (1908), p. 415.
30. See, for example, Linklater, *Transformation of Political Community* and A. Linklater, "The Problem of Harm in World Politics: Implications for the Sociology of States-Systems," *International Affairs*, 78 (2002), 319–338.
31. J. Dewey, "In Explanation of our Lapse" (1917), *MW* 10:292–296.
32. J. Dewey, "The Discrediting of Idealism" (1919), *MW* 11:180–186.
33. J. Dewey, "A Critique of American Civilization" (1928), *LW* 3:144.
34. Dewey, "Philosophy and American National Life," p. 77.
35. J. Dewey, "The League of Nations and the New Diplomacy" (1918), *MW* 11:132.
36. For an excellent survey of proposals by progressive internationalists of the period, see D. Long and P. Wilson, *Thinkers of the Twenty Years' Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
37. J. Dewey, "America in the World" (1918), *MW* 11:71.
38. Dewey, "America in the World," 71.
39. Dewey acknowledged increased bigotry on the part of Americans during the war in his essay, "In Explanation of our Lapse," pp. 293–294, as well

as "well organized" bigotry in his 1928 essay, "A Critique of American Civilization," p. 135.

40. See, for example, J. Dewey, "Address Delivered at the Twenty-Third Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" (1932), *LW* 6:224–231.
41. J. Dewey, "Force, Violence and Law" (1916), *MW* 10:212.
42. J. Dewey, "Force and Coercion" (1916), *MW* 10:251.
43. Dewey, "America in the World," p. 72.
44. There is irony in this assertion, since Dewey did not come to this conclusion with any more speed himself, at least publicly. It was not until the spring of 1917 that he came out in favor of US involvement in the war. J. Dewey, "The Future of Pacifism" (1917), *MW* 10:265. Again, I must thank Robert Westbrook for this point.
45. J. Dewey, "What America Will Fight For" (1917), *MW* 10:275.
46. Dewey, "The Future of Pacifism," p. 270.
47. J. Dewey, "The Discrediting of Idealism" (1919), *MW* 11:181.
48. Dewey, "The Discrediting of Idealism," p. 181.
49. Dewey, "The Discrediting of Idealism," p. 185.
50. J. Dewey, "Political Combination or Legal Cooperation" (1923), *MW* 15:106.
51. Dewey, "Political Combination or Legal Cooperation," p. 107.
52. Dewey, "Political Combination or Legal Cooperation," p. 107.
53. J. Dewey, "Shall the United States Join a World Court?" (1923), *MW* 15:91.
54. Dewey, "Shall the United States Join a World Court?," p. 89.
55. Dewey, "Political Combination or Legal Cooperation," p. 108.
56. J. Dewey, "If War Were Outlawed" (1923), *MW* 15:110.
57. Dewey came around to a kind of pacifism like that he praised in his friend, Jane Addams: that is, an "intelligent pacifism" that did not just renounce war but actively sought alternative means for generating international social reform, Dewey, "The Future of Pacifism," p. 266. However, he chose not to take on the project that her organization, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom did, campaigning and applying public pressure to effect the democratic reform of the only existing organization there was for international cooperation, the League of Nations. Of course, the League did not last, but its successor the United Nations has, and outlawry has not.
58. J. Dewey, "Our National Dilemma" (1920), *MW* 12:5.
59. Theirs was a very public, bitter debate in which Bourne charged that Dewey had betrayed his democratic, pragmatist ideals in supporting US entry into World War I. See R. S. Bourne, *War and the Intellectuals: Collected Essays, 1915–1919* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1999). It was so bitter that Dewey contradicted his own belief in and

advocacy of free speech by threatening to no longer write for the *New Republic* if the periodical continued to publish Bourne, and he also secured Bourne's dismissal from the editorial board of *The Dial*. See, respectively, S. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 305, and R. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), pp. 211–212.

60. J. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical" (1908), *MW* 4:104; emphasis in the original.
61. Dewey, "What Pragmatism Means by Practical," p. 102.
62. For an excellent historical account of this period, see Z. Steiner, *The Lights that Failed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
63. I say "underdeveloped" because Dewey implied the need for international publics as early as World War I and throughout much of his international political writing, but it was not until he wrote the introduction to the 1946 edition of *The Public and its Problems* that he said that "within the active scope of political discussion" is the "sense that relations between nations are taking on properties that constitute a public." J. Dewey, "1946 Introduction to *The Public and its Problems*," *LW* 2:376, 375.
64. A. Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (1992), 391–425. Interestingly, G. H. Mead is an important influence on Wendt's work.
65. J. Dewey, "What Will America Fight For?" (1918), *MW* 10:275.
66. J. Dewey, "Apostles of World Unity" (1929), *LW* 5:353. He also praised Emily Balch on the occasion of her winning the Nobel Peace Prize, saying that her tireless work organizing women for the cause of peace and establishing international conferences seeking solutions to transnational problems such as scientific warfare, the East European question, minorities, and war refugees, made her "one of the first private citizens of the world." J. Dewey, "Emily Green Balch" (1946), *LW* 17:151.
67. J. Dewey, "Outlawing Peace by Discussing War" (1928), *LW* 3:173–174.
68. J. Dewey, "The Fruits of Nationalism" (1927), *LW* 3:156.
69. J. Dewey, "Peace – By Pact or Covenant?" (1932), *LW* 6:193.
70. J. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (1927), *LW* 2:243–244.
71. Dewey, *The Public and its Problems*, p. 314.
72. J. Dewey, "What Are We Fighting For?" (1918), *MW* 11:105.
73. Dewey, "What Are We Fighting For?," p. 100.
74. J. Dewey, "Science and Society" (1931), *LW* 6:52.
75. Where the literature on cosmopolitan or transnational democracy draws upon the concept of the public sphere, Jürgen Habermas's concept is typically the reference point rather than Dewey's. However, Dewey's

functional understanding of a public as opposed to Habermas's concept founded on rational communication has a better possibility of constructing authentic expectations of responsible action in world politics, or so I argue in M. Cochran, "A Democratic Critique of Cosmopolitan Democracy," *European Journal of International Relations* 8 (2002), 517–548.

76. Dewey, "What Are We Fighting For?," p. 103.
77. P. Spees, "Women's Advocacy in the Creation of the International Criminal Court: Changing Landscapes of Justice and Power," *Signs* 28 (2003), 1233–1254.
78. Anne-Marie Slaughter, "The Real New World Order," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (1997), 184.
79. This idea is borrowed from J. Ratner, ed., *Intelligence in the Modern World: John Dewey's Philosophy* (New York: Modern Library, 1939).
80. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals are a good example of international social restructuring that aims to make individuals subjects of international political, economic, and social justice as Dewey intended. See www.un.org/millenniumgoals/, as well as Dewey's thoughts about UNESCO, J Dewey, "Contribution to *Democracy in a World of Tensions*" (1951), *LW* 16:399–404.
81. J. Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *MW* 12:173–174.
82. Dewey, "Creative Democracy – The Task before us," p. 229.
83. See M. Festenstein, *Pragmatism and Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 58–62.
84. However, on this last point, it is worth pointing out to the reader again that Dewey was also critical of what happened to American democracy during the war years internally and afterwards, for what it projected outward as lacking in democratic character at times. See J. Dewey, "A Critique of American Civilization."
85. Again, see his most formidable critic, Bourne, *War and the Intellectuals*.
86. J. Dewey, "Address to National Negro Conference" (1909), *MW* 4:157.
87. J. Dewey, "The World We Are Fighting to Create" (1942), *LW* 17:132.
88. J. Dewey, "The Post-war Mind" (1918), *MW* 11:112.
89. J. Dewey, "Philosophy and Democracy" (1919), *MW* 11:51.
90. J. Dewey, "Dualism and the Split Atom" (1945) *LW* 15:203. As it happens, Dewey's grandson, Gordon Chipman Dewey, worked on the Manhattan Project and later was hired to work for the Joint Chiefs of Staff with the Weapon Systems Evaluation Group in connection with the nuclear retaliatory mission. *New York Times*, 5 June 2002, Obituaries.

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